

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



16474.8

Harvard College
Library



FROM THE BEQUEST OF

SAMUEL SHAPLEIGH

CLASS OF 1789

LIBRARIAN OF HARVARD COLLEGE
1793-1800







JOHNSONIANA

ANECDOTES OF THE LATE

AMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

BY

MRS. PIOZZI, RICHARD CUMBERLAND

BISHOP PERCY AND OTHERS

TOGETHER WITH

THE DIARY OF DR. CAMPBELL

AND EXTRACTS FROM THAT OF

MADAME D'ARBLAY

NEWLY COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY

MRS ROBINA NAPIER

LONDON

GEORGE BELL AND SONS, YORK STREET

COVENT GARDEN

1884

6693
711



JOHNSONIANA.



Yours affe. Brother

Lichfield 21st Augt.
1776 Peter Garrick



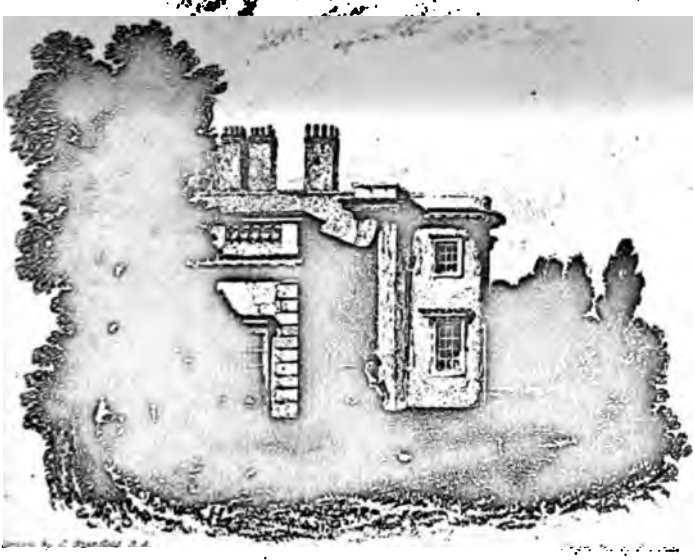
[redacted]

[redacted]WELL'S LIFE

OF

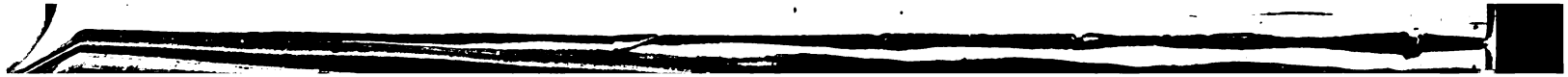
SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D.

JOHNSONIANA.



Dr. Johnson's House, Bolt Court.





PREFATORY NOTICE.

EVEN as Johnson, huge, ungainly, and infirm, has been immortalized and glorified by the brush of Reynolds, so his wisdom and his wit, his roughness and his tenderness, have been depicted for us by Boswell.

With these masterpieces of bodily and mental portraiture before us, we may often say, "No more! the picture is perfect, the biography complete, we care for no inferior touch!" But there are other moods in which we feel that different aspects of both body and mind might have been shown. We have his portrait in repose, thoughtful, almost sublime, but we sometimes feel, "Would that an artist eye had seen him at Uttoxeter doing penance in passionate repentance! Would that some one had noted the tender pathos of the farewell look on his dying servant, Catherine Chambers; or the glee with

describe Johnson as Mrs. Piozzi? Her "Anecdotes," now a scarce book, are here given exactly as she herself gave them to the world. Their best praise is, that after reading Boswell we can yet read them with pleasure. Indeed, if we had had no Boswell, we should still have obtained from Mrs. Piozzi's lively pages, a good notion of Johnson—a notion, however, that would have been more tender and true if it had been given by Mrs. Thrale instead of Mrs. Piozzi, who writes with something of the bitterness arising from consciousness of wrongdoing. Lord Macaulay has described Mrs. Thrale, "at the height of her prosperity and popularity, with gay spirits, quick wit, showy though superficial accomplishments, pleasing though not refined manners, a singularly amiable temper, and a loving heart." True words, to their fullest extent, excepting only the last and most important of all. A singularly amiable temper Mrs. Thrale certainly had, but "a loving heart" was surely the one thing wanting: the possession of this would have preserved her loyal to her husband's memory and the claims of friendship, and saved her from an infatuation that deteriorated her own character and alienated her best friends.

Next to these "Anecdotes," we place the letters from and to Miss Hill Boothby, showing Johnson in a sad and pathetic light, as the shades of life's evening were drawing round him. These letters are especially valued from having been collected and arranged by Johnson himself. They were first published by Mr. Wright of Lichfield, in a little volume (now scarce), together with the autobiographical sketch called "Annals," which in the present edition forms part of the Appendix to the first volume.

The biographical sketch by Tom Tyers finds a place here, because it was almost the first public tribute to Johnson at the time of his death, having been published in the "Gentleman's Magazine" only a few days after that event. Boswell calls it "an entertaining little collection of fragments," and says that Tyers "had lived with Dr. Johnson in as easy a manner as almost any of his very numerous acquaintance." Tyers himself modestly claims to have "worked his little bit of gold into as much gold leaf as he could."

The recollections of Johnson by Richard Cumberland are the pleasant memories of a gentleman and a scholar, refined and genial like their writer. They are extracted from the most amusing and interesting "Memoirs of Richard Cumberland, written by himself." The charming description of Johnson and Reynolds at Mrs. Cumberland's tea-table, is a refreshing contrast to the coarse and unsym-

pathetic character of the observations of some of Johnson's contemporaries; notably, of the Irish Dr. Campbell, the brutality of whose remarks on Johnson's appearance detract greatly from the pleasure we should otherwise have had in presenting to our readers that very interesting literary curiosity, "The Diary of a Visit to England in 1775." This Diary, after reposing behind an old press in one of the offices of the Supreme Court of New South Wales for no one knows how long, was discovered and published at Sydney in 1854 by Mr. Raymond (see vol. ii., p. 550, 551), and is now for the first time printed in England. Dr. Campbell gave out that his chief object in visiting London at this time was to see the "lions," of whom Johnson was the chief. He describes many of the same dinners and conversations as Boswell, and some of them even more fully. It is curious to trace the agreements and differences; but the whole Diary is vigorous and amusing.

Dr. Campbell is especially interested in two very different classes, the clergy and the play-actors. He visits all the principal churches and theatres, and remarks on sermons and plays with the same freedom of speech. He describes Johnson's outer man, as we have said, with much coarse exaggeration, but his accounts of some conversations are excellent, and we are greatly indebted to him for the report of Johnson's views on Irish affairs as given in the Diary ("Johnsoniana," p. 454), and at greater length in his "Strictures on the History of Ireland" (p. 336-8).

Johnson evidently received Dr. Campbell's advances with kindness

their early days, before Hannah's native sense and fun had been cramped and dulled, and before Fanny's style was ruined by affectation.

Of all Johnson's friends, we should naturally, perhaps, look most eagerly to Sir Joshua and Miss Reynolds for notices of him. Sir Joshua was, Boswell tells us, Johnson's "*dulce decus*, with whom he maintained an uninterrupted intimacy to the last hour of his life." Opportunities for observation must have been endless, for there seems to have been hardly a day when the friends did not meet in the painting room or in general society; and that Reynolds's conception of Johnson's character was lofty in the extreme, is proved by the portrait from his hand. But we must confess that when Reynolds exchanges his brush for the pen, he fills us with disappointment and surprise, while the "Recollections" of Johnson by Miss Reynolds, though containing some few touches not to be met with elsewhere, will not bear comparison with those of Mrs. Piozzi, Hannah More, or Miss Burney. Both these articles are included in this volume more from respect to the claims of their writers than from their own intrinsic merit or interest.

From the lips and pen of Burke, little regarding Johnson has, alas! been preserved. We regret this the more because through twenty-seven years of uninterrupted friendship we trace his affectionate respect and admiration, and the touching and beautiful "Character" Burke drew of Reynolds shows what we might have had of Johnson.

This collection of contemporary opinion is closed by an essay from the pen of Arthur Murphy, whose uninterrupted intimacy with Johnson for thirty years, and keen appreciation of the wit and humour which he thought Johnson's chief characteristic, entitle him to a respectful hearing. But this Essay is in itself most interesting—it may repeat a few of the current mistakes of the time, but it contains information not found elsewhere; for instance, in the account of the acknowledgment by Johnson of the authorship of the "Parliamentary Debates." In this Essay also is given (pp. 374-376) what we know not where else to find, Murphy's fine translation or imitation of Johnson's Latin Poem, written in discouragement and despair after revising the Dictionary, and for the reproduction of this touching self-portraiture we claim, and believe we shall gain, the gratitude of all lovers of Johnson.

ROBINA NAPIER.

Holkham Vicarage,
Nov. 26th, 1883.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
MRS. PIOZZI'S ANECDOTES	2-113
Mrs. Piozzi's Preface	3-4
Johnson's birth and family	6
His infancy	6-10
Sent to school	10
At College	14, 15
Verses on a Sprig of Myrtle	16
Johnson's love of Oxford	17
Oxford and Cambridge compared	17, 18
Johnson's Toryism	18, 19
His translation of Anacreon's Dove	20, 21
His facility and dilatoriness in writing	21
His generosity in granting literary assistance	22
The Dictionary	23
His opinion of Pope	24
On French writers	25
"Have done with canting"	26
Some Parodies by Johnson	27-30

PAGE

Impromptu translations 65
Johnson's love of conversation 67
Anecdotes of Goldsmith and Johnson 70
Johnson's quick and sometimes rough retorts 78
His fine saying of Sir J. Reynolds 78
And of Edmund Burke 80
Strange applications made to Johnson 85
Johnson's account of his beating Tom Osborne 88
The curious mistake that led to the acquaintance of Murphy and Johnson 89
Anecdotes of Burke and Johnson 91
Johnson objects to being handed down to posterity as *Blinking Sam* . 93
His delight in conversation 99
The charm of driving in a coach 102
Johnson a great reader of French literature 105
His close observation of the smallest matters, though his sight so defective 106, 107
Mrs. Piozzi's account of the separation from Johnson 108
Her description of Johnson's person, especially of his piercing eyes . 110
His general character 110-113
Postscript 114

APOPHTHEGMS, SENTIMENTS, OPINIONS, AND OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS, from Hawkins' edition of Johnson's Works 117

LETTERS FROM MRS. HILL BOOTHBY 131-167

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY T. TYERS 171-193

RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHNSON BY CUMBERLAND 197

JOHNSON AT THE CHELSEA CHINA MANUFACTORY 207

ANECDOTES AND REMARKS BY BISHOP PERCY 211

DIARY OF A VISIT TO ENGLAND IN 1775 BY DR. THOMAS CAMPBELL. 219
Holyhead to Bangor 219
Bangor, Conway, Chester, to Birmingham 220, 221
Stratford and Shakespeare's tomb 222
From Oxford to London 223
Scene described at the representation of "Braganza" 224
Brutality of the audience 225
Political morality 225, 226
Hears the talk of the Club about Johnson and Burke 227
Calls on Mr. and Mrs. Thrale 228
Dines with Archdeacon Congreve 229
Meets Johnson at dinner at the Thrales' 229
Dinner party at Mr. Thrale's 234
Answer to Taxation no Tyranny 238
Dines with Murphy, Boswell, and Baretti 239
Dines with Mr. Dilly, with Boswell and Johnson 241
Talks with Johnson on Ireland 242
Meets Johnson at dinner at the Thrales' 243
Boswell annoys Johnson with questions 245

PAGE

Meets Johnson, who requests him to call on him 248
Calls on Johnson 249
Bath and Bristol 251, 252
Dr. Campbell's second visit to London 254
Dr. Campbell's third visit to London 254
Visits Johnson, and discusses Irish affairs 254, 255
Dr. Campbell's fourth visit to London 255
Dr. Campbell's fifth visit to London 256
Visit to Paris 256
Visit to Brighton. 258
Dr. Campbell's sixth visit to England 260
Dr. Campbell's seventh visit to England 260

EXTRACTS RELATING TO JOHNSON FROM MRS. HANNAH MORE'S CORRESPONDENCE. 265

EXTRACTS RELATING TO JOHNSON FROM THE DIARY OF MADAME D'ARBLAY 279-302

EXTRACTS FROM REV. T. TWINING'S LETTERS 303

RECOLLECTIONS OF DR. JOHNSON BY MISS REYNOLDS 309

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS ON JOHNSON'S CHARACTER 329

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS ON JOHNSON'S INFLUENCE 335

AN ESSAY ON THE LIFE AND GENIUS OF SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D., BY ARTHUR MURPHY 337

LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

MRS. THRALE, AFTERWARDS MRS. PIOZZI . . . *Frontispiece*

MR. THRALE'S HOUSE AT STREATHAM *Title*

H. THRALE, from a painting by Sir J. Reynolds . *to face page* 50

THE SUMMER HOUSE AT STREATHAM . . „ „ 108

VARIOUS AUTOGRAPHS (*one page*) *end of volume*

ANECDOTES

OF THE LATE

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

DURING THE LAST

TWENTY YEARS OF HIS LIFE.

BY

Salusbury Thrale
Mrs. HESTHER LYNCH PIOZZI.

PREFACE.

I HAVE somewhere heard or read, that the Preface before a book, like the portico before a house, should be contrived, so as to catch, but not detain the attention of those who desire admission to the family within, or leave to look over the collection of pictures made by one whose opportunities of obtaining them we know to have been not unfrequent. I wish not to keep my readers long from such intimacy with the manners of Dr. Johnson, or such knowledge of his sentiments as these pages can convey. To urge my distance from England as an excuse for the book's being ill written, would be ridiculous; it might indeed serve as a just reason for my having written it at all; because, though others may print the same aphorisms and stories, I cannot *here* be sure that they have done so. As the Duke says however to the Weaver, in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Never excuse; if your play be a bad one, keep at least the excuses

progress to the sea, while the great parent of African plenty, flowing from an almost invisible source, and unenriched by any extraneous waters, except eleven nameless rivers, pours his majestic torrent into the ocean by seven celebrated mouths.

But I must conclude my Preface, and begin my book, the first I ever presented before the Public; from whose awful appearance in some measure to defend and conceal myself, I have thought fit to retire behind the Telamonian shield, and shew as little of myself as possible; well aware of the exceeding difference there is, between fencing in the school and fighting in the field.—Studious however to avoid offending, and careless of that offence which can be taken without a cause, I here not unwillingly submit my slight performance to the decision of that glorious country, which I have the daily delight to hear applauded in others, as eminently just, generous, and humane.

ANECDOTES

OF THE LATE

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

TOO much intelligence is often as pernicious to Biography as too little; the mind remains perplexed by contradiction of probabilities, and finds difficulty in separating report from truth. If Johnson then lamented that so little had ever been said about Butler,[1] I might with more reason be led to complain that so much has been said about himself; for numberless informers but distract or cloud information, as glasses which multiply will for the most part be found also to obscure. Of a life, too, which for the last twenty years was passed in the very front of literature, every leader of a literary company, whether officer or subaltern, naturally becomes either author

SAMUEL JOHNSON was the son of Michael Johnson, a bookseller at Litchfield, in Staffordshire; a very pious and worthy man, but wrong-headed, positive, and afflicted with melancholy, as his son, from whom alone I had the information, once told me: his business, however, leading him to be much on horseback, contributed to the preservation of his bodily health, and mental sanity; which, when he staid long at home, would sometimes be about to give way; and Mr. Johnson said, that when his work-shop, a detached building, had fallen half down for want of money to repair it, his father was not less diligent to lock the door every night, though he saw that any body might walk in at the back part, and knew that there was no security obtained by barring the front door. "*This* (says his son) was madness, you may see, and would have been discoverable in other instances of the prevalence of imagination, but that poverty prevented it from playing such tricks as riches and leisure encourage." Michael was a man of still larger size and greater strength than his son, who was reckoned very like him, but did not delight in talking much of his family—"one has (says he) *so* little pleasure in reciting the anecdotes of beggary." One day, however, hearing me praise a favourite friend with partial tenderness as well as true esteem; Why do you like that man's acquaintance so, said he? Because, replied I, he is open and confiding, and tells me stories of his uncles and cousins; I love the light parts of a solid character. "Nay, if you are for family history, says Mr. Johnson good-humouredly, *I* can fit you: I had an uncle, Cornelius Ford, who, upon a journey, stopped and read an inscription written on a stone he saw standing by the way-side, set up, as it proved, in honour of a man who had leaped a certain leap thereabouts, the extent of which was specified upon the stone: Why now, says my uncle, I could leap it in my boots; and he did leap it in his boots. I had likewise another uncle, Andrew, continued he, my father's brother, who kept the ring in Smithfield (where they wrestled and boxed) for a whole year, and never was thrown or conquered. Here now are uncles for you, Mistress, if that's the way to your heart." Mr. Johnson was very conversant in the art of attack and defence by boxing, which science he had learned from this uncle Andrew, I believe; and I have heard him descant upon the age when people were received, and when rejected, in the schools once held for that brutal amusement, much to the admiration of those who had no expectation of his skill in such matters, from the sight of a figure which precluded all possibility of personal prowess; though, because he saw Mr. Thrale one day leap over a cabriolet stool, to shew that he was

not tired after a chace of fifty miles or more, *he* suddenly jumped over it too; but in a way so strange and so unwieldy, that our terror lest he should break his bones, took from us even the power of laughing.

Michael Johnson was past fifty years old when he married his wife,[1] who was upwards of forty; yet I think her son told me she remained three years childless before he was born into the world, who so greatly contributed to improve it. In three years more she brought another son, Nathaniel, who lived to be twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old, and of whose manly spirit I have heard his brother speak with pride and pleasure, mentioning one circumstance, particular enough, that when the company were one day lamenting the badness of the roads, he enquired where they could be, as he travelled the country more than most people, and had never seen a bad road in his life. The two brothers did not, however, much delight in each other's company, being always rivals for the mother's fondness; and many of the severe reflections on domestic life in "Rasselas," took their source from its author's keen recollections of the time passed in his early years. Their father Michael died of an inflammatory fever, at the age of seventy-six, as Mr. Johnson told me: their mother at eighty-nine, of a gradual decay. She was slight in her person, he said, and rather below than above the common size. So excellent was her character, and so blameless her life, that when an oppressive neighbour once endeavoured to take from her a little field she possessed, he could persuade no attorney to undertake the cause against a woman so beloved in her

At the age of two years Mr. Johnson was brought up to London by his mother, to be touched by Queen Anne for the scrophulous evil, which terribly afflicted his childhood, and left such marks as greatly disfigured a countenance naturally harsh and rugged, beside doing irreparable damage to the auricular organs, which never could perform their functions since I knew him; and it was owing to that horrible disorder, too, that one eye was perfectly useless to him; that defect, however, was not observable, the eyes looked both alike. As Mr. Johnson had an astonishing memory, I asked him, if he could remember Queen Anne at all? "He had, he said, a confused, but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds, and a long black hood."

The christening of his brother he remembered with all its circumstances, and said, his mother taught him to spell and pronounce the words *little Natty*, syllable by syllable, making him say it over in the evening to her husband and his guests. The trick which most parents play with their children, that of showing off their newly-acquired accomplishments, disgusted Mr. Johnson beyond expression; he had been treated so himself, he said, till he absolutely loathed his father's caresses, because he knew they were sure to precede some unpleasing display of his early abilities; and he used, when neighbours came o' visiting, to run up a tree that he might not be found and exhibited, such, as no doubt he was, a prodigy of early understanding. His epitaph upon the duck he killed by treading on it at five years old,

"Here lies poor duck
That Samuel Johnson trod on;
If it had liv'd it had been good luck,
For it would have been an odd one;"

is a striking example of early expansion of mind, and knowledge of language; yet he always seemed more mortified at the recollection of the bustle his parents made with his wit, than pleased with the thoughts of possessing it. "That (said he to me one day) is the great misery of late marriages; the unhappy produce of them becomes the plaything of dotage: an old man's child, continued he, leads much such a life, I think, as a little boy's dog, teized with awkward fondness, and forced, perhaps, to sit up and beg, as we call it, to divert a company, who at last go away complaining of their disagreeable entertainment." In consequence of these maxims, and full of indignation against such parents as delight to produce their young ones early into the talking world, I have known Mr. Johnson give a good deal of pain by refusing to hear the verses the children could recite, or the songs they could sing; particularly one friend who told

him that his two sons should repeat Gray's Elegy to him alternately that he might judge who had the happiest cadence. "No, pray Sir," said he, "let the dears both speak it at once; more noise will by that means be made, and the noise will be sooner over." He told me the story himself, but I have forgot who the father was.

Mr. Johnson's mother was daughter to a gentleman in the country, such as there were many of in those days, who possessing, perhaps, one or two hundred pounds a year in land, lived on the profits, and sought not to increase their income: she was therefore inclined to think higher of herself than of her husband, whose conduct in money matters being but indifferent, she had a trick of teizing him about it, and was, by her son's account, very importunate with regard to her fears of spending more than they could afford, though she never arrived at knowing how much that was; a fault common, as he said, to most women who pride themselves on their œconomy. They did not however, as I could understand, live ill together on the whole: "my father (says he) could always take his horse and ride away for orders when things went badly." The lady's maiden was Ford; and the parson who sits next to the punch-bowl in Hogarth's "Modern Midnight Conversation" was her brother's son.[1] This Ford was a man who chose to be eminent only for vice, with talents that might have made him conspicuous in literature, and respectable in any profession he could have chosen: his cousin has mentioned him in the lives of Fenton and of Broome; and when he spoke of him to me it was always with tenderness, praising his acquaintance with life and man-

duct of those for whose welfare they were honestly and deeply concerned; and so late do those features of peculiarity come to their growth, which mark a character to all succeeding generations.

Dr. Johnson first learned to read of his mother and her old maid Catharine, in whose lap he well remembered sitting while she explained to him the story of St. George and the Dragon. I know not whether this is the proper place to add, that such was his tenderness, and such his gratitude, that he took a journey to Litchfield fifty-seven years afterwards to support and comfort her in her last illness; he had inquired for his nurse, and she was dead. The recollection of such reading as had delighted him in his infancy, made him always persist in fancying that it was the only reading which could please an infant; and he used to condemn me for putting Newbery's books into their hands as too trifling to engage their attention. "Babies do not want (said he) to hear about babies; they like to be told of giants and castles, and of somewhat which can stretch and stimulate their little minds." When in answer I would urge the numerous editions and quick sale of "Tommy Prudent" or "Goody Two Shoes:" "Remember always (said he) that the parents *buy* the books, and that the children never read them." Mrs. Barbauld however had his best praise, and deserved it; no man was more struck than Mr. Johnson with voluntary descent from possible splendour to painful duty.

At eight years old he went to school, for his health would not permit him to be sent sooner; and at the age of ten years his mind was disturbed by scruples of infidelity, which preyed upon his spirits, and made him very uneasy; the more so, as he revealed his uneasiness to no one, being naturally (as he said) "of a sullen temper and reserved disposition." He searched, however, diligently but fruitlessly, for evidences of the truth of revelation; and at length recollecting a book he had once seen in his father's shop, intitled, "De Veritate Religionis, &c." he began to think himself highly culpable for neglecting such a means of information, and took himself severely to task for this sin, adding many acts of voluntary, and to others unknown, penance. The first opportunity which offered (of course) he seized the book with avidity; but on examination, not finding himself scholar enough to peruse its contents, set his heart at rest; and, not thinking to inquire whether there were any English books written on the subject, followed his usual amusements, and considered his conscience as lightened of a crime. He redoubled his diligence to learn the language that contained the information he most wished for; but from

the pain which guilt had given him, he now began to deduce the soul's immortality, which was the point that belief first stopped at; and from that moment resolving to be a Christian, became one of the most zealous and pious ones our nation ever produced. When he had told me this odd anecdote of his childhood; "I cannot imagine (said he), what makes me talk of myself to you so, for I really never mentioned this foolish story to any body except Dr. Taylor, not even to my *dear dear* Bathurst,[1] whom I loved better than ever I loved any human creature; but poor Bathurst is dead!!!"—Here a long pause and a few tears ensued. Why Sir, said I, how like is all this to Jean Jacques Rousseau! as like, I mean, as the sensations of frost and fire, when my child complained yesterday that the ice she was eating *burned* her mouth. Mr. Johnson laughed at the incongruous ideas; but the first thing that presented itself to the mind of an ingenious and learned friend whom I had the pleasure to pass some time with here at Florence, was the same resemblance, though I think the two characters had little in common, further than an early attention to things beyond the capacity of other babies, a keen sensibility of right and wrong, and a warmth of imagination little consistent with sound and perfect health. I have heard him relate another odd thing of himself too, but it is one which every body has heard as well as me: how, when he was about nine years old, having got the play of "Hamlet" in his hand, and reading it quietly in his father's kitchen, he kept on steadily enough, till coming to the Ghost scene, he suddenly hurried upstairs to the street door that he might

his scholarship to be very great. His next master he despised, as knowing less than himself, I found; but the name of that gentleman has slipped my memory. Mr. Johnson was himself exceedingly disposed to the general indulgence of children, and was even scrupulously and ceremoniously attentive not to offend them: he had strongly persuaded himself of the difficulty people always find to erase early impressions either of kindness or resentment, and said, "he should never have so loved his mother when a man, had she not given him coffee she could ill afford, to gratify his appetite when a boy." If you had had children Sir, said I, would you have taught them any thing? "I hope (replied he), that I should have willingly lived on bread and water to obtain instruction for them; but I would not have set their future friendship to hazard for the sake of thrusting into their heads knowledge of things for which they might not perhaps have either taste or necessity. You teach your daughters the diameters of the planets, and wonder when you have done that they do not delight in your company. No science can be communicated by mortal creatures without attention from the scholar; no attention can be obtained from children without the infliction of pain, and pain is never remembered without resentment." That something should be learned, was, however, so certainly his opinion, that I have heard him say, how education had been often compared to agriculture, yet that it resembled it chiefly in this: "that if nothing is sown, no crop (says he) can be obtained." His contempt of the lady who fancied her son could be eminent without study, because Shakespeare was found wanting in scholastic learning, was expressed in terms so gross and so well known, I will not repeat them here.

To recollect, however, and to repeat the sayings of Dr. Johnson, is almost all that can be done by the writers of his life; as his life, at least since my acquaintance with him, consisted in little else than talking, when he was not absolutely employed in some serious piece of work; and whatever work he did, seemed so much below his powers of performance, that he appeared the idlest of all human beings; ever musing till he was called out to converse, and conversing till the fatigue of his friends, or the promptitude of his own temper to take offence, consigned him back again to silent meditation.

The remembrance of what had passed in his own childhood, made Mr. Johnson very solicitous to preserve the felicity of children; and when he had persuaded Dr. Sumner to remit the tasks usually given to fill up boys' time during the holidays, he rejoiced exceedingly in the success of his negociation, and told me that he had never ceased

representing to all the eminent schoolmasters in England, the absurd tyranny of poisoning the hour of permitted pleasure, by keeping future misery before the children's eyes, and tempting them by bribery or falsehood to evade it. "Bob Sumner (said he), however, I have at length prevailed upon: I know not indeed whether his tenderness was persuaded, or his reason convinced, but the effect will always be the same. Poor Dr. Sumner died, however, before the next vacation."

Mr. Johnson was of opinion, too, that young people should have *positive*, not *general* rules given for their direction. "My mother (said he) was always telling me that I did not *behave* myself properly; that I should endeavour to learn *behaviour*, and such cant: but when I replied, that she ought to tell me what to do, and what to avoid, her admonitions were commonly, for that time at least, at an end."

This, I fear, was however at best a momentary refuge, found out by perverseness. No man knew better than Johnson in how many nameless and numberless actions *behaviour* consists: actions which can scarcely be reduced to rule, and which come under no description. Of these he retained so many very strange ones, that I suppose no one who saw his odd manner of gesticulating, much blamed or wondered at the good lady's solicitude concerning her son's *behaviour*.

Though he was attentive to the peace of children in general, no man had a stronger contempt than he for such parents as openly profess that they cannot govern their children. "How (says he) is an

married, and confesses his inability to decide in a matter which concerns no man's happiness but his own?"—Mr. Johnson caught me another time reprimanding the daughter of my housekeeper for having sat down unpermitted in her mother's presence. "Why, she gets her living, does she not (said he), without her mother's help? Let the wench alone," continued he. And when we were again out of the women's sight who were concerned in the dispute: "Poor people's children, dear Lady (said he) never respect them: I did not respect my own mother, though I loved her: and one day, when in anger she called me a puppy, I asked her if she knew what they called a puppy's mother." We were talking of a young fellow who used to come often to the house; he was about fifteen years old, or less, if I remember right, and had a manner at once sullen and sheepish. "That lad (says Mr. Johnson) looks like the son of a schoolmaster; which (added he) is one of the very worst conditions of childhood: such a boy has no father, or worse than none; he never can reflect on his parent but the reflection brings to his mind some idea of pain inflicted, or of sorrow suffered."

I will relate one thing more that Dr. Johnson said about babyhood before I quit the subject; it was this: "That little people should be encouraged always to tell whatever they hear particularly striking, to some brother, sister, or servant, immediately before the impression is erased by the intervention of newer occurrences. He perfectly remembered the first time he ever heard of Heaven and Hell (he said), because when his mother had made out such a description of both places as she thought likely to seize the attention of her infant auditor, who was then in bed with her, she got up, and dressing him before the usual time, sent him directly to call a favourite workman in the house, to whom she knew he would communicate the conversation while it was yet impressed upon his mind. The event was what she wished, and it was to that method chiefly that he owed his uncommon felicity of remembering distant occurrences, and long past conversations."

At the age of eighteen Dr. Johnson quitted school, and escaped from the tuition of those he hated or those he despised. I have heard him relate very few college adventures. He used to say that our best accounts of his behaviour there would be gathered from Dr. Adams and Dr. Taylor, and that he was sure they would always tell the truth. He told me however one day, how, when he was first entered at the university, he passed a morning, in compliance with the customs of the place, at his tutor's chamber; but finding him no

scholar, went no more. In about ten days after, meeting the same gentleman,[1] Mr. Jordan, in the street, he offered to pass by without saluting him; but the tutor stopped, and enquired, not roughly neither, What he had been doing? "Sliding on the ice," was the reply; and so turned away with disdain. He laughed very heartily at the recollection of his own insolence, and said they endured it from him with wonderful acquiescence, and a gentleness that, whenever he thought of it, astonished himself. He told me too, that when he made his first declamation, he wrote over but one copy, and that coarsely; and having given it into the hand of the tutor who stood to receive it as he passed, was obliged to begin by chance and continue on how he could, for he had got but little of it by heart; so fairly trusting to his present powers for immediate supply, he finished by adding astonishment to the applause of all who knew how little was owing to study. A prodigious risque, however, said some one: "Not at all (exclaims Johnson), no man I suppose leaps at once into deep water who does not know how to swim."

I doubt not but this story will be told by many of his biographers, and said so to him when he told it me on the 18th of July, 1773. "And who will be my biographer (said he), do you think?" Goldsmith, no doubt, replied I, and he will do it the best among us. "The dog would write it best to be sure, replied he; but his particular malice towards me, and general disregard for truth, would make the book useless to all, and injurious to my character." Oh! as to that, said I, we should all fasten upon him, and force him to do you

zine of the year 1768, where I saw the following lines with his name to them, and asked if they were his.

VERSES SAID TO BE WRITTEN BY DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, AT THE REQUEST OF A GENTLEMAN TO WHOM A LADY HAD GIVEN A SPRIG OF MYRTLE.

"What hopes, what terrors, does thy gift create,
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate;
The Myrtle, ensign of supreme command,
Consign'd by Venus to Melissa's hand;
Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
Now grants, and now rejects a lover's prayer.
In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain:
The myrtle crowns the happy lover's heads,
Th' unhappy lover's grave the myrtle spreads:
O then the meaning of thy gift impart,
And ease the throbbings of an anxious heart!
Soon must this bough, as you shall fix his doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb."

"Why now, do but see how the world is gaping for a wonder! (cries Mr. Johnson) I think it is now just forty years ago that a young fellow had a sprig of myrtle given him by a girl he courted, and asked me to write him some verses that he might present her in return. I promised, but forgot; and when he called for his lines at the time agreed on—Sit still a moment (says I), dear Mund, and I'll fetch them thee—so stepped aside for five minutes, and wrote the nonsense you now keep such a stir about."

Upon revising these Anecdotes, it is impossible not to be struck with shame and regret that one treasured no more of them up; but no experience is sufficient to cure the vice of negligence: whatever one sees constantly, or might see constantly, becomes uninteresting; and we suffer every trivial occupation, every slight amusement, to hinder us from writing down, what indeed we cannot chuse but remember; but what we should wish to recollect with pleasure, unpoisoned by remorse for not remembering more. While I write this, I neglect impressing my mind with the wonders of art, and beauties of nature, that now surround me; and shall one day, perhaps, think on the hours I might have profitably passed in the Florentine Gallery, and reflecting on Raphael's St. John at that time, as upon Johnson's conversation in this moment, may justly exclaim of the months spent by me most delightfully in Italy—

"That I priz'd every hour that pass'd by,
Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;
But now they are past, and I sigh
And I grieve that I priz'd them no more."
SHENSTONE.

Dr. Johnson delighted in his own partiality for Oxford; and one day, at my house, entertained five members of the other university with various instances of the superiority of Oxford, enumerating the gigantic names of many men whom it had produced, with apparent triumph. At last I said to him, Why there happens to be no less than five Cambridge men in the room now. "I did not (said he) think of that till you told me; but the wolf don't count the sheep." When the company were retired, we happened to be talking of Dr. Barnard, the Provost of Eton, who died about that time; and after a long and just eulogium on his wit, his learning, and his goodness of heart: "He was the only man too (says Mr. Johnson quite seriously) that did justice to my good breeding; and you may observe that I am well-bred to a degree of needless scrupulosity. No man, (continued he, not observing the amazement of his hearers) no man is so cautious not to interrupt another; no man thinks it so necessary to appear attentive when others are speaking; no man so steadily refuses preference to himself, or so willingly bestows it on another, as I do; no body holds so strongly as I do the necessity of ceremony, and the ill effects which follow the breach of it: yet people think me rude; but Barnard did me justice." 'Tis pity, said I laughing, that he had not heard you compliment the Cambridge men after dinner

tutor, had much of his affection, though he despised his want of scholastic learning. "That creature would (said he) defend his pupils to the last: no young lad under his care should suffer for committing slight improprieties, while he had breath to defend, or power to protect them. If I had had sons to send to college (added he), Jordan should have been their tutor."

Sir William Browne the physician, who lived to a very extraordinary age, and was in other respects an odd mortal, with more genius than understanding, and more self-sufficiency than wit, was the only person who ventured to oppose Mr. Johnson, when he had a mind to shine by exalting his favourite university, and to express his contempt of the Whiggish notions which prevail at Cambridge. *He* did it once, however, with surprising felicity: his antagonist having repeated with an air of triumph the famous epigram written by Dr. Trapp,

> "Our royal master saw, with heedful eyes,
> The wants of his two universities:
> Troops he to Oxford sent, as knowing why
> That learned body wanted loyalty:
> But books to Cambridge gave, as, well discerning,
> That that right loyal body wanted learning,"

Which, says Sir William, might well be answered thus:

> "The king to Oxford sent his troop of horse,
> For Tories own no argument but force;
> With equal care to Cambridge books he sent,
> For Whigs allow no force but argument."

Mr. Johnson did him the justice to say, it was one of the happiest extemporaneous productions he ever met with; though he once comically confessed, that he hated to repeat the wit of a whig urged in support of whiggism. Says Garrick to him one day, Why did not you make me a tory, when we lived so much together, you love to make people tories? "Why (says Johnson, pulling a heap of halfpence from his pocket), did not the king make these guineas?"

Of Mr. Johnson's toryism the world has long been witness, and the political pamphlets written by him in defence of his party, are vigorous and elegant. He often delighted his imagination with the thoughts of having destroyed Junius, an anonymous writer who flourished in the years 1769 and 1770, and who kept himself so ingeniously concealed from every endeavour to detect him, that no probable guess was, I believe, ever formed concerning the author's

name, though at that time the subject of general conversation. Mr. Johnson made us all laugh one day, because I had received a remarkably fine Stilton cheese as a present from some person who had packed and directed it carefully, but without mentioning whence it came. Mr. Thrale, desirous to know who we were obliged to, asked every friend as they came in, but nobody owned it: "Depend upon it, Sir (says Johnson), it was sent by *Junius*."

The "False Alarm," his first and favourite pamphlet, wa[illegible]..en at our house between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve o'clock on Thursday night; we read it to Mr. Thrale when he came very late home from the House of Commons: the other political tracts followed in their order. I have forgotten which contains the stroke at Junius; but shall for ever remember the pleasure it gave him to have written it. It was however in the year 1775 that Mr. Edmund Burke made the famous speech in parliament,[1] that struck even foes with admiration, and friends with delight. Among the nameless thousands who are contented to echo those praises they have not skill to invent, *I* ventured, before Dr. Johnson himself, to applaud, with rapture, the beautiful passage in it concerning Lord Bathurst and the Angel; which, said our Doctor, had I been in the house, I would have answered *thus:*

"Suppose, Mr. Speaker, that to Wharton, or to Marlborough, or to any of the eminent whigs of the last age, the devil had, not with any great impropriety, consented to appear; he would perhaps in somewhat like these words have commenced the conversation:

by my care, be carried even across the spacious Atlantic, and settle in America itself, the sure consequences of our beloved whiggism."

This I thought a thing so very particular, that I begged his leave to write it down directly, before any thing could intervene that might make me forget the force of the expressions: a trick, which I have however seen played on common occasions, of sitting steadily down at the other end of the room to write at the moment what should be said in company, either *by* Dr. Johnson or *to* him, I never practised myself, nor approved of in another. There is something so ill-bred, and so inclining to treachery in this conduct, that were it commonly adopted, all confidence would soon be exiled from society, and a conversation assembly-room would become tremendous as a court of justice. A set of acquaintance joined in familiar chat may say a thousand things, which (as the phrase is) pass well enough at the time, though they cannot stand the test of critical examination; and as all talk beyond that which is necessary to the purposes of actual business is a kind of game, there will be ever found ways of playing fairly or unfairly at it, which distinguish the gentleman from the juggler. Dr. Johnson, as well as many of my acquaintance, knew that I kept a common-place book; and he one day said to me good-humouredly, that he would give me something to write in my repository. "I warrant (said he) there is a great deal about me in it: you shall have at least one thing worth your pains; so if you will get the pen and ink, I will repeat to you Anacreon's Dove directly; but tell at the same time, that as I never was struck with any thing in the Greek language till I read *that*, so I never read any thing in the same language since, that pleased me as much. I hope my translation (continued he) is not worse than that of Frank Fawkes." Seeing me disposed to laugh, "Nay nay (said he), Frank Fawkes has done them very finely."

"Lovely courier of the sky,
Whence and whither dost thou fly?
Scatt'ring as thy pinions play,
Liquid fragrance all the way:
Is it business? is it love?
Tell me, tell me, gentle Dove.
"'Soft Anacreon's vows I bear,
'Vows to Myrtale the fair;
'Grac'd with all that charms the heart,
'Blushing nature, smiling art.
'Venus, courted by an ode,
'On the bard her Dove bestow'd.
'Vested with a master's right

'Now Anacreon rules my flight:
'His the letters that you see,
'Weighty charge consign'd to me:
'Think not yet my service hard,
'Joyless task without reward;
'Smiling at my master's gates,
'Freedom my return awaits.
'But the liberal grant in vain
'Tempts me to be wild again:
'Can a prudent Dove decline
'Blissful bondage such as mine?
'Over hills and fields to roam,
'Fortune's guest without a home;
'Under leaves to hide one's head,
'Slightly shelter'd, coarsely fed;
'Now my better lot bestows
'Sweet repast, and soft repose;
'Now the generous bowl I sip
'As it leaves Anacreon's lip;
'Void of care, and free from dread,
'From his fingers snatch his bread,
'Then with luscious plenty gay,
'Round his chamber dance and play;
'Or from wine, as courage springs,
'O'er his face extend my wings;
'And when feast and frolic tire,
'Drop asleep upon his lyre.

by himself intended as his own portrait; and that he had his own outset into life in his eye when he wrote the eastern story of Gelaleddin. Of the allegorical papers in the "Rambler," Labour and Rest was his favourite; but Serotinus, the man who returns late in life to receive honours in his native country, and meets with mortification instead of respect, was by him considered as a masterpiece in the science of life and manners. The character of Prospero in the fourth volume, Garrick took to be his; and I have heard the author say, that he never forgave the offence. Sophron was likewise a picture drawn from reality; and by Gelidus the philosopher, he meant to represent Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. The man immortalised for purring like a cat was, as he told me, one Busby, a proctor in the Commons. He who barked so ingeniously, and then called the drawer to drive away the dog, was father to Dr. Salter of the Charterhouse. He who sung a song, and by correspondent motions of his arm chalked out a giant on the wall, was one Richardson, an attorney. The letter signed Sunday, was written by Miss Talbot; and he fancied the billets in the first volume of the "Rambler," were sent him by Miss Mulso, now Mrs. Chapone. The papers contributed by Mrs. Carter, had much of his esteem, though he always blamed me for preferring the letter signed Chariessa to the allegory, where religion and superstition are indeed most masterly delineated.

When Dr. Johnson read his own satire, in which the life of a scholar is painted, with the various obstructions thrown in his way to fortune and to fame, he burst into a passion of tears one day: the family and Mr. Scott only were present, who, in a jocose way, clapped him on the back, and said, What's all this, my dear Sir? Why you, and I, and *Hercules*, you know, were all troubled with *melancholy*. As there are many gentlemen of the same name, I should say, perhaps, that it was a Mr. Scott who married Miss Robinson, and that I think I have heard Mr. Thrale call him George Lewis, or George Augustus, I have forgot which. He was a very large man, however, and made out the triumvirate with Johnson and Hercules comically enough. The Doctor was so delighted at his odd sally, that he suddenly embraced him, and the subject was immediately changed. I never saw Mr. Scott but that once in my life.

Dr. Johnson was liberal enough in granting literary assistance to others,[1] I think; and innumerable are the prefaces, sermons, lectures, and dedications which he used to make for people who begged of

[1] See Life, vol. iii., p. 424.

him. Mr. Murphy related in his and my hearing one day, and he did not deny it, that when Murphy joked him the week before for having been so diligent of late between Dodd's sermon and Kelly's prologue, that Dr. Johnson replied, "Why, Sir, when they come to me with a dead stay-maker and a dying parson, what can a man do?" He *said*, however, that "he hated to give away literary performances, or even to sell them too cheaply: the next generation shall not accuse me (added he) of beating down the price of literature: one hates, besides, ever to give that which one has been accustomed to sell; would not you, Sir (turning to Mr. Thrale), rather give away money than porter?"

Mr. Johnson had never, by his own account, been a close student, and used to advise young people never to be without a book in their pocket, to be read at bye-times when they had nothing else to do. "It has been by that means (said he to a boy at our house one day) that all my knowledge has been gained, except what I have picked up by running about the world with my wits ready to observe, and my tongue ready to talk. A man is seldom in a humour to unlock his book-case, set his desk in order, and betake himself to serious study; but a retentive memory will do something, and a fellow shall have strange credit given him, if he can but recollect striking passages from different books, keep the authors separate in his head, and bring his stock of knowledge artfully into play: How else (added he) do the gamesters manage when they play for more money than they are worth?" His Dictionary, however, could not, one would think,

fellows that eat frogs?" I have however often thought Dr. Johnson more free than prudent in professing so loudly his little skill in the Greek language: for though he considered it as a proof of a narrow mind to be too careful of literary reputation, yet no man could be more enraged than he, if an enemy, taking advantage of this confession, twitted him with his ignorance; and I remember when the king of Denmark was in England, one of his noblemen was brought by Mr. Colman to see Dr. Johnson at our country-house; and having heard, he said, that he was not famous for Greek literature, attacked him on the weak side; politely adding, that he chose that conversation on purpose to favour himself. Our Doctor, however, displayed so copious, so compendious a knowledge of authors, books, and every branch of learning in that language, that the gentleman appeared astonished. When he was gone home (says Johnson), "Now for all this triumph, I may thank Thrale's Xenophon here, as, I think, excepting that *one*, I have not looked in a Greek book these ten years; but see what haste my dear friends were all in (continued he) to tell this poor innocent foreigner that I knew nothing of Greek! Oh, no, he knows nothing of Greek!" with a loud burst of laughing.

When Davies printed the "Fugitive Pieces" without his knowledge or consent;[1] How, said I, would Pope have raved, had he been served so? "We should never (replied he) have heard the last on't, to be sure; but then Pope was a narrow man: I will however (added he) storm and bluster *myself* a little this time;"—so went to London in all the wrath he could muster up. At his return I asked how the affair ended: "Why (said he), I was a fierce fellow, and pretended to be very angry, and Thomas was a good-natured fellow, and pretended to be very sorry: so *there* the matter ended: I believe the dog loves me dearly. Mr. Thrale (turning to my husband), what shall you and I do that is good for Tom Davies? We will do something for him, to be sure."

Of Pope as a writer he had the highest opinion, and once when a lady at our house talked of his preface to Shakespeare as superior to Pope's: "I fear not, Madam (said he), the little fellow has done wonders." His superior reverence of Dryden notwithstanding still appeared in his talk as in his writings; and when some one mentioned the ridicule thrown on him in the "Rehearsal," as having hurt his general character as an author: "On the contrary (says Mr. Johnson), the greatness of Dryden's reputation is now the only principle of vitality which keeps the duke of Buckingham's play from putrefaction."

[1] See Life, vol. ii., p. 111.

It was not very easy however for people not quite intimate with Dr. Johnson, to get exactly his opinion of a writer's merit, as he would now and then divert himself by confounding those who thought themselves obliged to say to-morrow what he had said yesterday; and even Garrick, who ought to have been better acquainted with his tricks, professed himself mortified, that one time when he was extolling Dryden in a rapture that I suppose disgusted his friend, Mr. Johnson suddenly challenged him to produce twenty lines in a series that would not disgrace the poet and his admirer. Garrick produced a passage that he had once heard the Doctor commend, in which he *now* found, if I remember rightly, sixteen faults, and made Garrick look silly at his own table. When I told Mr. Johnson the story, "Why, what a monkey was David now (says he), to tell of his own disgrace!" And in the course of that hour's chat he told me, how he used to teize Garrick by commendations of the tomb scene in Congreve's "Mourning Bride," protesting that Shakespeare had in the same line of excellence nothing as good: "All which is strictly *true* (said he); but that is no reason for supposing Congreve is to stand in competition with Shakespeare: these fellows know not how to blame, nor how to commend." I forced him one day, in a similar humour, to prefer Young's description of Night to the so much admired ones of Dryden and Shakespeare, as more forcible, and more general. Every reader is not either a lover or a tyrant, but every reader is interested when he hears that

"Creation sleeps; 'tis as the general pulse

(said he), but the substance slight." Of James Harris's Dedication to his "Hermes" I have heard him observe, that, though but fourteen lines long, there were six grammatical faults in it. A friend was praising the style of Dr. Swift; Mr. Johnson did not find himself in the humour to agree with him: the critic was driven from one of his performances to the other. At length you *must* allow me, said the gentleman, that there are *strong facts* in the account of the Four last Years of Queen Anne: "Yes surely Sir (replies Johnson), and so there are in the Ordinary of Newgate's account." This was like the story which Mr. Murphy tells, and Johnson always acknowledged: How Mr. Rose of Hammersmith, contending for the preference of Scotch writers over the English, after having set up his authors like nine-pins, while the Doctor kept bowling them down again; at last, to make sure of victory, he named Ferguson upon Civil Society, and praised the book for being written in a *new* manner. "I do not (says Johnson) perceive the value of this new manner; it is only like Buckinger, who had no hands, and so wrote with his feet." Of a modern Martial, when it came out: "There are in these verses (says Dr. Johnson) too much folly for madness, I think, and too much madness for folly." If, however, Mr. Johnson lamented, that the nearer he approached to his own times, the more enemies he should make, by telling biographical truths in his "Lives of the later Poets," what may I not apprehend, who, if I relate anecdotes of Mr. Johnson, am obliged to repeat expressions of severity, and sentences of contempt? Let me at least soften them a little, by saying, that he did not hate the persons he treated with roughness, or despise them whom he drove from him by apparent scorn. He really loved and respected many whom he would not suffer to love him. And when he related to me a short dialogue that passed between himself and a writer of the first eminence in the world, when he was in Scotland, I was shocked to think how he must have disgusted him. "Dr. ——— asked me (said he), why I did not join in their public worship when among them? for (said he) I went to your churches often when in England. "So (replied Johnson), I have read that the Siamese sent ambassadors to Louis Quatorze, but I never heard that the king of France thought it worth his while to send ambassadors from his court to that of *Siam*." He was no gentler with myself, or those for whom I had the greatest regard. When I one day lamented the loss of a first cousin killed in America[1]——"Prithee, my dear (said he), have done with canting: how would the world be worse for it, I may ask,

[1] For Baretti's version of this story, see Life, vol. iii., p. 426.

if all your relations were at once spitted like larks, and roasted for Presto's supper?" Presto was the dog that lay under the table while we talked.——When we went into Wales together, and spent some time at Sir Robert Cotton's at Lleweny, one day at dinner I meant to please Mr. Johnson particularly with a dish of very young peas. Are not they charming? said I to him, while he was eating them.—"Perhaps (said he) they would be so—to a *pig*." I only instance these replies, to excuse my mentioning those he made to others.

When a well-known author published his poems in the year 1777: Such a one's verses are come out, said I: "Yes (replied Johnson) and this frost has struck them in again. Here are some lines I have written to ridicule them: but remember that I love the fellow dearly, now—for all I laugh at him.

"'Wheresoe'er I turn my view,
All is strange, yet nothing new:
Endless labour all along,
Endless labour to be wrong;
Phrase that Time has flung away;
Uncouth words in disarray,
Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
Ode, and elegy, and sonnet.'"

When he parodied the verses of another eminent writer, it was done with more provocation, I believe, and with some merry malice. A serious translation of the same lines, which I think are from Euripides,

"When cates luxuriant pile the spacious dish,
And purple nectar glads the festive hour;
The guest, without a want, without a wish,
Can yield no room to Music's soothing pow'r."

Some of the old legendary stories put in verse by modern writers provoked him to caricature them thus one day at Streatham; but they are already well-known, I am sure.

"The tender infant, meek and mild,
Fell down upon the stone;
The nurse took up the squealing child,
But still the child squeal'd on."

A famous ballad also, beginning *Rio verde, Rio verde,* when I commended the translation of it, he said he could do it better himself—as thus:

"Glassy water, glassy water,
Down whose current clear and strong,
Chiefs confus'd in mutual slaughter,
Moor and Christian roll along."

But Sir, said I, this is not ridiculous at all. "Why no (replied he), why should I always write ridiculously?—perhaps because I made these verses to imitate such a one, naming him:

Home

"'Hermit hoar, in solemn cell
Wearing out life's evening gray;
Strike thy bosom sage! and tell,
What is bliss, and which the way?

"'Thus I spoke, and speaking sigh'd,
Scarce repress'd the starting tear,
When the hoary Sage reply'd,
Come, my lad, and drink some beer.'"

I could give another comical instance of caricatura imitation. Recollecting some day, when praising these verses of Lopez de Vega,

"*Se acquien los leones vence*
Vence una muger hermosa
O al de flaco averguença
O ella di ser mas furiosa,"

more than he thought they deserved, Mr. Johnson instantly observed, "that they were founded on a trivial conceit; and that conceit ill-explained, and ill-expressed beside.——The lady, we all know, does not conquer in the same manner as the lion does: 'Tis a mere play of words (added he), and you might as well say, that

"'If the man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father.'"

And this humour is of the same sort with which he answered the friend who commended the following line:

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free."

"To be sure (said Dr. Johnson),

"'Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat.'"

This readiness of finding a parallel, or making one, was shewn by him perpetually in the course of conversation.—When the French verses of a certain pantomime were quoted thus,

"Je suis Cassandre descendüe des cieux,
Pour vous faire entendre, mesdames et messieurs,
Que je suis Cassandre descendüe des cieux;

he cried out gaily and suddenly, almost in a moment,

"'I am Cassandra come down from the sky,
To tell each by-stander what none can deny,
That I am Cassandra come down from the sky.'"

The pretty Italian verses too, at the end of Baretti's book, called "Easy Phraseology," he did *all' improviso*, in the same manner:

"'If at your coming princes disappear,
Comets! come every day—and stay a year.'"

When some one in company commended the verses of M. de Benserade *à son Lit;*

"*Theatre des ris et des pleurs,*
Lit! ou je nais, et ou je meurs,
Tu nous fais voir comment voisins,
Sont nos plaisirs, et nos chagrins."

To which he replied without hesitating,

"'In bed we laugh, in bed we cry,
And born in bed, in bed we die;
The near approach a bed may shew
Of human bliss to human woe.'"

The inscription on the collar of Sir Joseph Banks's goat which had been on two of his adventurous expeditions with him, and was then, by the humanity of her amiable master, turned out to graze in Kent, as a recompence for her utility and faithful service, was given me by Johnson in the year 1777 I think, and I have never yet seen it printed.

"*Perpetui, ambita, bis terrâ, premia lactis,*
Hæc habet altrici Capra secunda Jovis."

The epigram written at Lord Anson's house many years ago, "where (says Mr. Johnson) I was well received and kindly treated, and with the true gratitude of a wit ridiculed the master of the house before I had left it an hour," has been falsely printed in many papers since his death. I wrote it down from his own lips one evening in August 1772, not neglecting the little preface, accusing himself of making so graceless a return for the civilities shewn him. He had, among other elegancies about the park and gardens, been made to observe a temple to the winds, when this thought naturally presented itself *to a wit.*

"*Gratum animum laudo; Qui debuit omnia ventis,*
Quam bene ventorum, surgere templa jubet!"

A translation of Dryden's epigram too, I used to fancy I had to myself.

"*Quos laudat vates, Graius, Romanus, et Anglus,*
Tres tria temporibus secla dedere suis:
Sublime ingenium Graius,—Romanus habebat
Carmen grande sonans, Anglus utrumque tulit.

Nil majus natura capit; clarare priores
Quæ potuere duos, tertius unus habet:"

m the famous lines written under Milton's picture:

"Three poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn:
The first in loftiness of thought surpast,
The next in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go,
To make a third she join'd the former two."

One evening in the oratorio season of the year 1771, Mr. Johnson nt with me to Covent-Garden theatre; and though he was for the st part an exceedingly bad playhouse companion, as his person w people's eyes upon the box, and the loudness of his voice made difficult for me to hear any body but himself; he sat surprisingly iet, and I flattered myself that he was listening to the music. When were got home however he repeated these verses, which he said had made at the oratorio, and he bid me translate them.

IN THEATRO.

" *Tertii verso quater orbe lustri*
Quid theatrales tibi crispe pompae!
Quam decet canos male literatos
Sera voluptas!

" *Tene mulceri fidibus canoris?*

"The scholar's pride can Brent disarm?
His heart can soft Guadagni warm?
Or scenes with sweet delusion charm
The climacteric eye?

"The social club, the lonely tower,
Far better suit thy midnight hour;
Let each according to his power
In worth or wisdom shine!

"And while play pleases idle boys,
And wanton mirth fond youth employs,
To fix the soul, and free from toys,
That useful task be thine."

The copy of verses in Latin hexameters, as well as I remember, which he wrote to Dr. Lawrence, I forgot to keep a copy of; and he obliged me to resign his translation of the song beginning, *Busy, curious, thirsty fly*, for him to give Mr. Langton, with a promise *not* to retain a copy. I concluded he knew why, so never enquired the reason. He had the greatest possible value for Mr. Langton, of whose virtue and learning he delighted to talk in very exalted terms; and poor Dr. Lawrence had long been his friend and confident. The conversation I saw them hold together in Essex-street one day in the year 1781 or 1782, was a melancholy one, and made a singular impression on my mind. He was himself exceedingly ill, and I accompanied him thither for advice. The physician was however, in some respects, more to be pitied than the patient: Johnson was panting under an asthma and dropsy; but Lawrence had been brought home that very morning struck with the palsy, from which he had, two hours before we came, strove to awaken himself by blisters: they were both deaf, and scarce able to speak besides; one from difficulty of breathing, the other from paralytic debility. To give and receive medical counsel therefore, they fairly sate down on each side a table in the Doctor's gloomy apartment, adorned with skeletons, preserved monsters, &c. and agreed to write Latin billets to each other: such a scene did I never see! "You (said Johnson) are *timidè* and *gelidè*;" finding that his friend had prescribed palliative not drastic remedies. It is not *me*, replies poor Lawrence in an interrupted voice; 'tis nature that is *gelidè* and *timidè*. In fact he lived but few months after I believe, and retained his faculties still a shorter time. He was a man of strict piety and profound learning, but little skilled in the knowledge of life or manners, and died without having ever enjoyed the reputation he so justly deserved.

Mr. Johnson's health had been always extremely bad since I first knew him, and his over-anxious care to retain without blemish the perfect sanity of his mind, contributed much to disturb it. He had studied medicine diligently in all its branches; but had given particular attention to the diseases of the imagination, which he watched in himself with a solicitude destructive of his own peace, and intolerable to those he trusted. Dr. Lawrence told him one day, that if he would come and beat him once a week he would bear it; but to hear his complaints was more than *man* could support. 'Twas therefore that he tried, I suppose, and in eighteen years contrived to weary the patience of a *woman*. When Mr. Johnson felt his fancy, or fancied he felt it, disordered, his constant recurrence was to the study of arithmetic; and one day that he was totally confined to his chamber, and I enquired what he had been doing to divert himself; he shewed me a calculation which I could scarce be made to understand, so vast was the plan of it, and so very intricate were the figures: no other indeed than that the national debt, computing it at one hundred and eighty millions sterling, would, if converted into silver, serve to make a meridian of that metal, I forgot how broad, for the globe of the whole earth, the real *globe*. On a similar occasion I asked him (knowing what subject he would like best to talk upon), How his opinion stood towards the question between Paschal and Soame Jennings about number and numeration? as the French philosopher observes that infinity, though on all sides astonishing, appears most so when the idea is connected with the idea of number; for the

As ethics or figures, or metaphysical reasoning, was the sort of talk he most delighted in, so no kind of conversation pleased him less I think, than when the subject was historical fact or general polity. "What shall we learn from *that* stuff (said he)? let us not fancy like Swift that we are exalting a woman's character by telling how she

> "'Could name the ancient heroes round,
> Explain for what they were renown'd,' &c."

I must not however lead my readers to suppose that he meant to reserve such talk for *men's* company as a proof of pre-eminence. "He never (as he expressed it) desired to hear of the *Punic war* while he lived: such conversation was lost time (he said), and carried one away from common life, leaving no ideas behind which could serve *living wight* as warning or direction."

> "How I should act is not the case,
> But how would Brutus in my place?"

"And now (cries Mr. Johnson, laughing with obstreperous violence), if these two foolish lines can be equalled in folly, except by the two succeeding ones—shew them me."

I asked him once concerning the conversation powers of a gentleman with whom I was myself unacquainted—"He talked to me at club one day (replies our Doctor) concerning Catiline's conspiracy—so I withdrew my attention, and thought about Tom Thumb."

Modern politics fared no better. I was one time extolling the character of a statesman, and expatiating on the skill required to direct the different currents, reconcile the jarring interests, &c. "Thus (replies he) a mill is a complicated piece of mechanism enough, but the water is no part of the workmanship."—On another occasion, when some one lamented the weakness of a then present minister, and complained that he was dull and tardy, and knew little of affairs,—"You may as well complain, Sir (says Johnson), that the accounts of time are kept by the clock; for he certainly does stand still upon the stair-head—and we all know that he is no great chronologer."—In the year 1777, or thereabouts, when all the talk was of an invasion,[1] he said most pathetically one afternoon, "Alas! alas! how this unmeaning stuff spoils all my comfort in my friends conversation! Will the people never have done with it; and shall I never hear a sentence again without the *French* in it? Here is no invasion coming, and you *know* there is none. Let the vexatious and frivolous

[1] See Life, vol. iii., pp. 39, 40.

k alone, or suffer it at least to teach you *one* truth; and learn by
s perpetual echo of even unapprehended distress, how historians
gnify events expected, or calamities endured; when you know they
e at this very moment collecting all the big words they can find, in
ich to describe a consternation never felt, for a misfortune which
ver happened. Among all your lamentations, who eats the less? ho sleeps the worse, for one general's ill success, or another's pitulation? *Oh, pray* let us hear no more of it!"—No man how-er was more zealously attached to his party; he not only loved a y himself, but he loved a man the better if he heard he hated a ig. "Dear Bathurst (said he to me one day) was a man to my y heart's content: he hated a fool, and he hated a rogue, and he ted a *whig;* he was a very good *hater*."

Some one mentioned a gentleman of that party for having behaved dly on an occasion where faction was not concerned:—"Is he not itizen of London, a native of North America, and a whig? (says hnson)—Let him be absurd, I beg of you: when a monkey is *too* e a man, it shocks one."

Severity towards the poor was, in Dr. Johnson's opinion (as is ible in his Life of Addison particularly), an undoubted and con-nt attendant or consequence upon whiggism; and he was not con-ted with giving them relief, he wished to add also indulgence. e loved the poor as I never yet saw any one else do, with an earnest sire to make them happy.—What signifies, says some one, giving

the rule of his conduct, and only expecting salvation as he was able to obey its precepts.

While Dr. Johnson possessed however the strongest compassion for poverty or illness, he did not even pretend to feel for those who lamented the loss of a child, a parent, or a friend.—"These are the distresses of sentiment (he would reply) which a man who is really to be pitied has no leisure to feel. The sight of people who want food and raiment is so common in great cities, that a surly fellow like me, has no compassion to spare for wounds given only to vanity or softness." No man, therefore, who smarted from the ingratitude of his friends, found any sympathy from our philosopher; "Let him do good on higher motives next time," would be the answer; "he will then be sure of his reward."—It is easy to observe that the justice of such sentences made them offensive; but we must be careful how we condemn a man for saying what we know to be true, only because it *is* so. I hope that the reason our hearts rebelled a little against his severity, was chiefly because it came from a living mouth.—Books were invented to take off the odium of immediate superiority, and soften the rigour of duties prescribed by the teachers and censors of human kind—setting at least those who are acknowledged wiser than ourselves at a distance. When we recollect however, that for this very reason *they* are seldom consulted and little obeyed, how much cause shall his contemporaries have to rejoice that their living Johnson forced them to feel the reproofs due to vice and folly—while Seneca and Tillotson were no longer able to make impression—except on our shelves. Few things indeed which pass well enough with others would do with him: he had been a great reader of Mandeville, and was ever on the watch to spy out those stains of original corruption, so easily discovered by a penetrating observer even in the purest minds. I mentioned an event, which if it had happened would greatly have injured Mr. Thrale and his family—and then dear Sir, said I, how sorry you would have been! "I *hope* (replied he after a long pause)—I should have been *very* sorry;—but remember Rochefoucault's maxim."[1]—I would rather (answered I) remember Prior's verses, and ask,

> "What need of books these truths to tell,
> Which folks perceive that cannot spell?

[1] "Dans l'adversité de nos meilleurs amis, nous trouvons toujours quelque chose qui ne nous deplait pas."—*Reflexions ou Sentences et Maximes Morales*, 1st ed., 1665, No. 99. This maxim was one of the fifteen suppressed by the author after the second edition.—*Ed.*

And must we spectacles apply,
To see what hurts our naked eye?"

Will *any* body's mind bear this eternal microscope that you place upon your own so? "I never (replied he) saw one that *would*, except that of my dear Miss Reynolds—and her's is very near to purity itself."—Of slighter evils, and friends less distant than our own household, he spoke less cautiously. An acquaintance lost the almost certain hope of a good estate that had been long expected. Such a one will grieve (said I) at her friend's disappointment. "She will suffer as much perhaps (said he) as your horse did when your cow miscarried."—I professed myself sincerely grieved when accumulated distresses crushed Sir George Colebrook's family; and I was so. "Your own prosperity (said he) may possibly have so far increased the natural tenderness of your heart, that for aught I know you *may* be a *little sorry*; but it is sufficient for a plain man if he does not laugh when he sees a fine new house tumble down all on a sudden, and a snug cottage stand by ready to receive the owner, whose birth entitled him to nothing better, and whose limbs are left him to go to work again with."

I used to tell him in jest that his morality was easily contented; and when I have said something as if the wickedness of the world gave me concern, he would cry out aloud against canting, and protest that he thought there was very little gross wickedness in the world, and still less of extraordinary virtue. Nothing indeed more surely disgusted Dr. Johnson than hypocrisy: he loved not to be told of

of the word must have felt themselves animated by his manner of reading the holy scriptures; and to pray by his sick bed, required strength of body as well as of mind, so vehement were his manners, and his tones of voice so pathetic. I have many times made it my request to heaven that I might be spared the sight of his death, and I was spared it!

Mr. Johnson, though in general a gross feeder, kept fast in Lent, particularly the holy week, with a rigour very dangerous to his general health; but though he had left off wine (for religious motives as I always believed, though he did not own it), yet he did not hold the commutation of offences by voluntary penance, or encourage others to practise severity upon themselves. He even once said, "that he thought it an error to endeavour at pleasing God by taking the rod of reproof out of his hands." And when we talked of convents, and the hardships suffered in them—"Remember always (said he) that a convent is an idle place, and where there is nothing to be *done* something must be *endured*: mustard has a bad taste *per se* you may observe, but very insipid food cannot be eaten without it."

His respect however for places of religious retirement was carried to the greatest degree of earthly veneration: the Benedictine convent at Paris paid him all possible honours in return, and the Prior and he parted with tears of tenderness. Two of that college being sent to England on the mission some years after, spent much of their time with him at Bolt Court I know, and he was ever earnest to retain their friendship; but though beloved by all his Roman Catholic acquaintance, particularly Dr. Nugent, for whose esteem he had a singular value, yet was Mr. Johnson a most unshaken church of England man; and I think, or at least I once *did* think, that a letter written by him to Mr. Barnard the King's librarian, when he was in Italy collecting books, contained some very particular advice to his friend to be on his guard against the seductions of the church of Rome.

The settled aversion Dr. Johnson felt towards an infidel he expressed to all ranks, and at all times, without the smallest reserve; for though on common occasions he paid great deference to birth or title, yet his regard for truth and virtue never gave way to meaner considerations. We talked of a dead wit one evening, and somebody praised him—"Let us never praise talents so ill employed, Sir; we foul our mouths by commending such infidels (said he)." Allow him the *lumieres* at least, intreated one of the company—"I do allow him, Sir (replied Johnson), just enough to light him to hell."—Of a Jamaica gentleman, then lately dead—"He will not, whither he is

now gone (said Johnson), find much difference, I believe, either in the climate or the company."—The Abbé Reynal probably remembers that, being at the house of a common friend in London, the master of it approached Johnson with that gentleman so much celebrated in his hand, and this speech in his mouth: Will you permit me, Sir, to present to you the Abbé Reynal. "*No, Sir,*" (replied the Doctor very loud) and suddenly turned away from them both.

Though Mr. Johnson had but little reverence either for talents or fortune, when he found them unsupported by virtue; yet it was sufficient to tell him a man was very pious, or very charitable, and he would at least *begin* with him on good terms, however the conversation might end. He would, sometimes too, good-naturedly enter into a long chat for the instruction or entertainment of people he despised. I perfectly recollect his condescending to delight my daughter's dancing-master with a long argument about *his* art; which the man protested, at the close of the discourse, the Doctor knew more of than himself; who remained astonished, enlightened, and amused by the talk of a person little likely to make a good disquisition upon dancing. I have sometimes indeed been rather pleased than vexed when Mr. Johnson has given a rough answer to a man who perhaps deserved one only half as rough, because I knew he would repent of his hasty reproof, and make us all amends by some conversation at once instructive and entertaining, as in the following cases: A young fellow asked him abruptly one day, Pray, Sir, what and where is Palmira? I heard somebody talk last night of the

back, and drawing his chair among us, with altered looks and a softened voice, joined in the general chat, insensibly led the conversation to the subject of marriage, where he laid himself out in a dissertation so useful, so elegant, so founded on the true knowledge of human life, and so adorned with beauty of sentiment, that no one ever recollected the offence, except to rejoice in its consequences. He repented just as certainly however, if he had been led to praise any person or thing by accident more than he thought it deserved; and was on such occasions comically earnest to destroy the praise or pleasure he had unintentionally given.

Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned some picture as excellent. "It has often grieved me, Sir (said Mr. Johnson), to see so much mind as the science of painting requires, laid out upon such perishable materials: why do not you oftener make use of copper? I could wish your superiority in the art you profess, to be preserved in stuff more durable than canvas." Sir Joshua urged the difficulty of procuring a plate large enough for historical subjects, and was going to raise further observations: "What foppish obstacles are these! (exclaims on a sudden Dr. Johnson:) Here is Thrale has a thousand tun of copper; you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose; it will serve him to brew in afterwards: Will it not, Sir?" (to my husband who sat by.) Indeed Dr. Johnson's utter scorn of painting was such, that I have heard him say, that he should sit very quietly in a room hung round with the works of the greatest masters, and never feel the slightest disposition to turn them if their backs were outermost, unless it might be for the sake of telling Sir Joshua that he *had* turned them. Such speeches may appear offensive to many, but those who knew he was too blind to discern the perfections of an art which applies itself immediately to our eye-sight, must acknowledge he was not in the wrong.

He delighted no more in music than painting; he was almost as deaf as he was blind: travelling with Dr. Johnson was for these reasons tiresome enough. Mr. Thrale loved prospects, and was mortified that his friend could not enjoy the sight of those different dispositions of wood and water, hill and valley, that travelling through England and France affords a man. But when he wished to point them out to his companion: "Never heed such nonsense," would be the reply: "a blade of grass is always a blade of grass, whether in one country or another: let us if we *do* talk, talk about something; men and women are my subjects of enquiry; let us see how these differ from those we have left behind."

When we were at Rouen together, he took a great fancy to the Abbé Roffette, with whom he conversed about the destruction of the order of Jesuits, and condemned it loudly, as a blow to the general power of the church, and likely to be followed with many and dangerous innovations, which might at length become fatal to religion itself, and shake even the foundation of Christianity. The gentleman seemed to wonder and delight in his conversation: the talk was all in Latin, which both spoke fluently, and Mr. Johnson pronounced a long eulogium upon Milton with so much ardour, eloquence, and ingenuity, that the Abbé rose from his seat and embraced him. My hasband seeing them apparently so charmed with the company of each other, politely invited the Abbé to England, intending to oblige his friend; who, instead of thanking, reprimanded him severely before the man, for such a sudden burst of tenderness towards a person he could know nothing at all of; and thus put a sudden finish to all his own and Mr. Thrale's entertainment, from the company of the Abbé Roffette.

When at Versailles the people shewed us the theatre. As we stood on the stage looking at some machinery for playhouse purposes: Now we are here, what shall we act, Mr. Johnson,—The Englishman at Paris? "No, no (replied he), we will try to act Harry the Fifth." His dislike of the French was well known to both nations, I believe; but he applauded the number of their books and the graces of their style. "They have few sentiments (said he), but they express them

a friend one day, that I did not like goose; one smells it so while it is roasting, said I: "But you, Madam (replies the Doctor), have been at all times a fortunate woman, having always had your hunger so forestalled by indulgence, that you never experienced the delight of smelling your dinner beforehand." Which pleasure, answered I pertly, is to be enjoyed in perfection by such as have the happiness to pass through Porridge-Island[1] of a morning. "Come, come, (says he gravely), let's have no sneering at what is serious to so many: hundreds of your fellow-creatures, dear Lady, turn another way, that they may not be tempted by the luxuries of Porridge-Island to wish for gratifications they are not able to obtain: you are certainly not better than all of *them;* give God thanks that you are happier."

I received on another occasion as just a rebuke from Mr. Johnson, for an offence of the same nature, and hope I took care never to provoke a third; for after a very long summer particularly hot and dry, I was wishing naturally but thoughtlessly for some rain to lay the dust as we drove along the Surry roads. "I cannot bear (replied he, with much asperity and an altered look), when I know how many poor families will perish next winter for want of that bread which the present drought will deny them, to hear ladies sighing for rain, only that their complexions may not suffer from the heat, or their clothes be incommoded by the dust;—for shame! leave off such foppish lamentations, and study to relieve those whose distresses are real."

With advising others to be charitable however, Dr. Johnson did not content himself. He gave away all he had, and all he ever had gotten, except the two thousand pounds he left behind; and the very small portion of his income which he spent on himself, with all our calculation, we never could make more than seventy, or at most fourscore pounds a year, and he pretended to allow himself a hundred. He had numberless dependents out of doors as well as in, "who, as he expressed it, did not like to see him latterly unless he brought 'em money." For those people he used frequently to raise contributions on his richer friends; "and this (says he) is one of the thousand reasons which ought to restrain a man from drony solitude and useless retirement. Solitude (added he one day) is dangerous to reason, without being favour-

[1] Porridge-Island is a mean street in London, filled with cooks shops for the convenience of the poorer inhabitants; the real name of it I know not, but suspect that it is generally known by, to have been originally a term of derision.

Porridge-Island was a paved alley near the church of St. Martin in the Fields. —*Ed.*

able to virtue: pleasures of some sort are necessary to the intellectual as to the corporeal health; and those who resist gaiety, will be likely for the most part to fall a sacrifice to appetite; for the solicitations of sense are always at hand, and a dram to a vacant and solitary person is a speedy and seducing relief. Remember (continued he) that the solitary mortal is certainly luxurious, probably superstitious, and possibly mad: the mind stagnates for want of employment, grows morbid, and is extinguished like a candle in foul air." It was on this principle that Johnson encouraged parents to carry their daughters early and much into company; "for what harm can be done before so many witnesses? Solitude is the surest nurse of all prurient passions, and a girl in the hurry of preparation, or tumult of gaiety, has neither inclination nor leisure to let tender expressions soften or sink into her heart. The ball, the show, are not the dangerous places: no, 'tis the private friend, the kind consoler, the companion of the easy vacant hour, whose compliance with her opinions can flatter her vanity, and whose conversation can just sooth, without ever stretching her mind, that is the lover to be feared: he who buzzes in her ear at court, or at the opera, must be contented to buzz in vain." These notions Dr. Johnson carried so very far, that I have heard him say, "If you would shut up any man with any woman, so as to make them derive their whole pleasure from each other, they would inevitably fall in love, as it is called, with each other; but at six months end if you would throw them both into public life where they might change partners at

dancing however, all found their advocates in Dr. Johnson, who inculcated, upon principle, the cultivation of those arts, which many a moralist thinks himself bound to reject, and many a Christian holds unfit to be practised. "No person (said he one day) goes undressed till he thinks himself of consequence enough to forbear carrying the badge of his rank upon his back." And in answer to the arguments urged by Puritans, Quakers, &c. against showy decorations of the human figure, I once heard him exclaim, "Oh, let us not be found when our Master calls us, ripping the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our souls and tongues! Let us all conform in outward customs, which are of no consequence, to the manners of those whom we live among, and despise such paltry distinctions. Alas, Sir (continued he), a man who cannot get to heaven in a green coat, will not find his way thither the sooner in a grey one." On an occasion of less consequence, when he turned his back on Lord Bolingbroke in the rooms at Brighthelmstone, he made this excuse: "I am not obliged, Sir (said he to Mr. Thrale, who stood fretting), to find reasons for respecting the rank of him who will not condescend to declare it by his dress or some other visible mark: what are stars and other signs of superiority made for?"

The next evening however he made us comical amends, by sitting by the same nobleman, and haranguing very loudly about the nature and use and abuse of divorces. Many people gathered round them to hear what was said, and when my husband called him away, and told him to whom he had been talking—received an answer which I will not write down.

Though no man perhaps made such rough replies as Dr. Johnson, yet nobody had a more just aversion to general satire; he always hated and censured Swift for his unprovoked bitterness against the professors of medicine; and used to challenge his friends, when they lamented the exorbitancy of physicians fees, to produce him one instance of an estate raised by physic in England. When an acquaintance too was one day exclaiming against the tediousness of the law and its partiality; "Let us hear, Sir (said Johnson), no general abuse; the law is the last result of human wisdom acting upon human experience for the benefit of the public."

As the mind of Dr. Johnson was greatly expanded, so his first care was for general, not particular or petty morality; and those teachers had more of his blame than praise, I think, who seek to oppress life with unnecessary scruples: "Scruples would (as he observed) certainly make men miserable, and seldom make them good. Let us

ever (he said) studiously fly from those instructors against whom our Saviour denounces heavy judgments, for having bound up burdens grievous to be borne, and laid them on the shoulders of mortal men." No one had however higher notions of the hard task of true Christianity than Johnson, whose daily terror lest he had not done enough, originated in piety, but ended in little less than disease. Reasonable with regard to others, he had formed vain hopes of performing impossibilities himself; and finding his good works ever below his desires and intent, filled his imagination with fears that he should never obtain forgiveness for omissions of duty and criminal waste of time. These ideas kept him in constant anxiety concerning his salvation; and the vehement petitions he perpetually made for a longer continuance on earth, were doubtless the cause of his so prolonged existence; for when I carried Dr. Pepys to him in the year 1782, it appeared wholly impossible for any skill of the physician or any strength of the patient to save him. He was saved that time however by Sir Lucas's prescriptions; and less skill on one side, or less strength on the other, I am morally certain, would not have been enough. He had however possessed an athletic constitution, as he said the man who dipped people in the sea at Brighthelmstone acknowledged; for seeing Mr. Johnson swim in the year 1766, Why Sir (says the dipper), you must have been a stout-hearted gentleman forty years ago.

Mr. Thrale and he used to laugh about that story very often: but Garrick told a better, for he said that in their young days, when some

satisfaction of the affrighted company. We inquired as to the truth of this curious recital. "The dogs have been somewhat magnified, I believe Sir (was the reply): they were, as I remember, two stout young pointers; but the story has gained but little."

One reason why Mr. Johnson's memory was so particularly exact, might be derived from his rigid attention to veracity; being always resolved to relate every fact as it stood, he looked even on the smaller parts of life with minute attention, and remembered such passages as escape cursory and common observers. "A story (says he) is a specimen of human manners, and derives its sole value from its truth. When Foote has told me something, I dismiss it from my mind like a passing shadow: when Reynolds tells me something, I consider myself as possessed of an idea the more."

Mr. Johnson liked a frolic or a jest well enough; though he had strange serious rules about it too: and very angry was he if any body offered to be merry when he was disposed to be grave. "You have an ill-founded notion (said he) that it is clever to turn matters off with a joke (as the phrase is); whereas nothing produces enmity so certain, as one person's showing a disposition to be merry when another is inclined to be either serious or displeased."

One may gather from this how he felt, when his Irish friend Grierson, hearing him enumerate the qualities necessary to the formation of a poet, began a comical parody upon his ornamented harangue in praise of a cook, concluding with this observation, that he who dressed a good dinner was a more excellent and a more useful member of society than he who wrote a good poem. "And in this opinion (said Mr. Johnson in reply) all the dogs in the town will join you."

Of this Mr. Grierson I have heard him relate many droll stories, much to his advantage as a wit, together with some facts more difficult to be accounted for; as avarice never was reckoned among the vices of the laughing world. But Johnson's various life, and spirit of vigilance to learn and treasure up every peculiarity of manner, sentiment, or general conduct, made his company, when he chose to relate anecdotes of people he had formerly known, exquisitely amusing and comical. It is indeed inconceivable what strange occurrences he had seen, and what surprising things he could tell when in a communicative humour. It is by no means my business to relate memoirs of his acquaintance; but it will serve to show the character of Johnson himself, when I inform those who never knew him, that no man told a story with so good a grace, or knew so well what would

make an effect upon his auditors. When he raised contributions for some distressed author, or wit in want, he often made us all more than amends by diverting descriptions of the lives they were then passing in corners unseen by any body but himself; and that odd old surgeon [1] whom he kept in his house to tend the out-pensioners, and of whom he said most truly and sublimely, that

> "In misery's darkest caverns known,
> His useful care was ever nigh,
> Where hopeless anguish pours her groan,
> And lonely want retires to die."

I have forgotten the year, but it could scarcely I think be later than 1765 or 1766, that he was called abruptly from our house after dinner, and returning in about three hours, said, he had been with an enraged author, whose landlady pressed him for payment within doors, while the bailiffs beset him without; that he was drinking himself drunk with Madeira to drown care, and fretting over a novel which when finished was to be his whole fortune; but he could not get it done for distraction, nor could he step out of doors to offer it to sale. Mr. Johnson therefore set away the bottle, and went to the bookseller, recommending the performance, and desiring some immediate relief; which when he brought back to the writer, he called the woman of the house directly to partake of punch, and pass their time in merriment.[2]

It was not till ten years after, I dare say, that something in Dr. Goldsmith's behaviour struck me with an idea that he was the very man, and then Johnson confessed that he was so; the novel was the

another claimant to a share of the bowl, besides a woman who always lived with him, and a footman who used to carry out petitions for charity, he borrowed a chairman's watch, and pawning it for half a crown, paid a clergyman to marry him to a fellow-lodger in the wretched house they all inhabited, and got so drunk over the guinea bowl of punch the evening of his wedding-day, that having many years lost the use of one leg, he now contrived to fall from the top of the stairs to the bottom, and break his arm, in which condition his companions left him to call Mr. Johnson, who relating the series of his tragi-comical distresses, obtained from the Literary Club a seasonable relief.

Of that respectable society[1] I have heard him speak in the highest terms, and with a magnificent panegyric on each member, when it consisted only of a dozen or fourteen friends; but as soon as the necessity of enlarging it brought in new faces, and took off from his confidence in the company, he grew less fond of the meeting, and loudly proclaimed his carelessness *who* might be admitted, when it was become a mere dinner club. I *think* the original names, when I first heard him talk with fervour of every member's peculiar powers of instructing or delighting mankind, were Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Burke, Mr. Langton, Mr. Beauclerc, Dr. Percy, Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, Sir Robert Chambers, Mr. Dyer, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, whom he called their Romulus, or said somebody else of the company called him so, which was more likely: but this was, I believe, in the year 1775 or 1776. It was a supper meeting then, and I fancy Dr. Nugent ordered an omelet sometimes on a Friday or Saturday night; for I remember Mr. Johnson felt very painful sensations at the sight of that dish soon after his death, and cried, "Ah, my poor dear friend! I shall never eat omelet with *thee* again!" quite in an agony. The truth is, nobody suffered more from pungent sorrow at a friend's death than Johnson, though he would suffer no one else to complain of their losses in the same way; "for (says he) we must either outlive our friends you know, or our friends must outlive us; and I see no man that would hesitate about the choice."

Mr. Johnson loved late hours extremely, or more properly hated early ones. Nothing was more terrifying to him than the idea of retiring to bed, which he never would call going to rest, or suffer another to call so. "I lie down (said he) that my acquaintance may sleep; but I lie down to endure oppressive misery, and soon rise again to pass the night in anxiety and pain." By this pathetic manner,

[1] Life, vol. i., p. 391, &c., and Appendix.

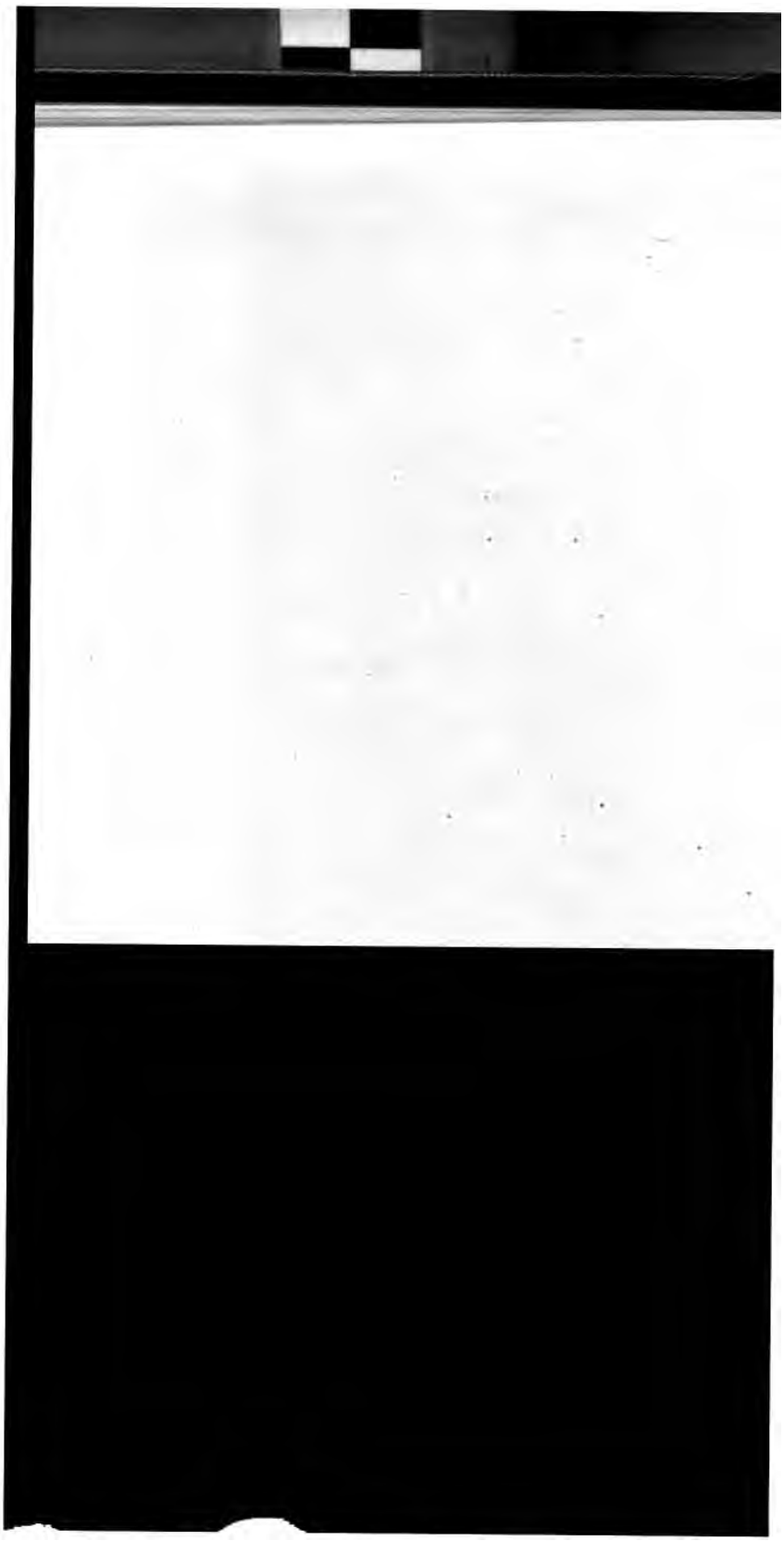
which no one ever possessed in so eminent a degree, he used to shock me from quitting his company, till I hurt my own health not a little by sitting up with him when I was myself far from well: nor was it an easy matter to oblige him even by compliance, for he always maintained that no one forbore their own gratifications for the sake of pleasing another, and if one *did* sit up it was probably to amuse one's self. Some right however he certainly had to say so, as he made his company exceedingly entertaining when he had once forced one, by his vehement lamentations and piercing reproofs, not to quit the room, but to sit quietly and make tea for him, as I often did in London till four o'clock in the morning. At Streatham indeed I managed better, having always some friend who was kind enough to engage him in talk, and favour my retreat.

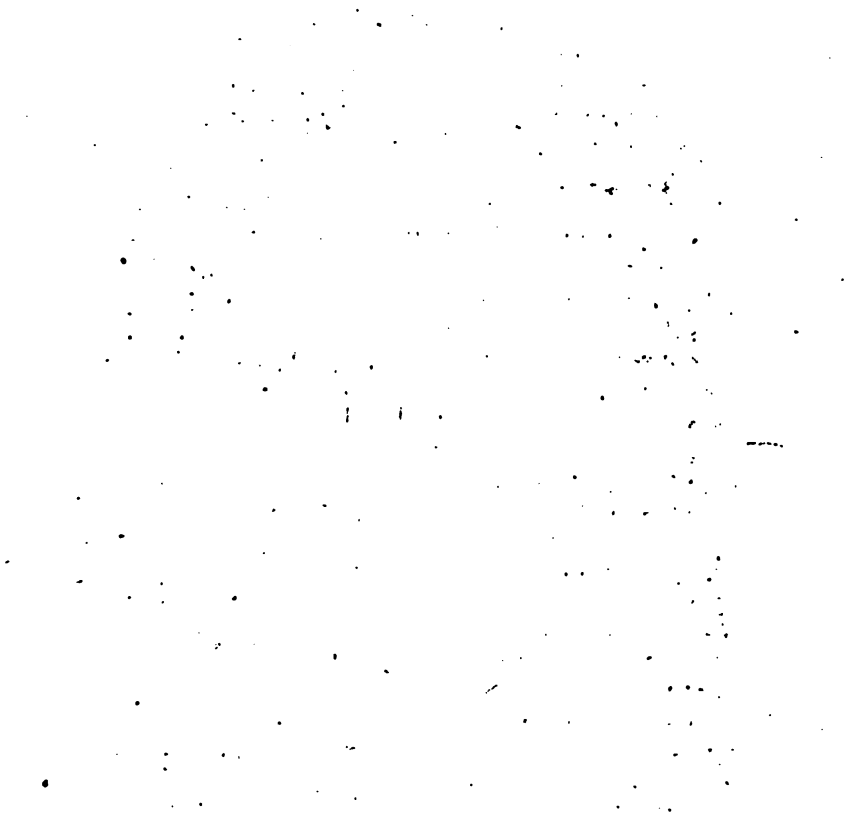
The first time I ever saw this extraordinary man[1] was in the year 1764, when Mr. Murphy, who had been long the friend and confidential intimate of Mr. Thrale, persuaded him to wish for Johnson's conversation, extolling it in terms which that of no other person could have deserved, till we were only in doubt how to obtain his company, and find an excuse for the invitation. The celebrity of Mr. Woodhouse a shoemaker, whose verses were at that time the subject of common discourse, soon afforded a pretence, and Mr. Murphy brought Johnson to meet him, giving me general cautions not to be surprised at his figure, dress, or behaviour. What I recollect best of the day's talk, was his earnestly recommending Addison's works to Mr. Woodhouse as a model for imitation. "Give nights and days,

grew so exceedingly bad, that he could not stir out of his room in the court he inhabited for many *weeks* together, I think *months*.

Mr. Thrale's attentions and my own now became so acceptable to him, that he often lamented to us the horrible condition of his mind, which he said was nearly distracted; and though he charged *us* to make him odd solemn promises of secrecy on so strange a subject, yet when we waited on him one morning, and heard him, in the most pathetic terms, beg the prayers of Dr. Delap, who had left him as we came in, I felt excessively affected with grief, and well remember my husband involuntarily lifted up one hand to shut his mouth, from provocation at hearing a man so wildly proclaim what he could at last persuade no one to believe; and what, if true, would have been so very unfit to reveal.

Mr. Thrale went away soon after, leaving me with him, and bidding me prevail on him to quit his close habitation in the court and come with us to Streatham, where I undertook the care of his health, and had the honour and happiness of contributing to its restoration. This task, though distressing enough sometimes, would have been less so had not my mother and he disliked one another extremely, and teized me often with perverse opposition, petty contentions, and mutual complaints. Her superfluous attention to such accounts of the foreign politics as are transmitted to us by the daily prints, and her willingness to talk on subjects he could not endure, began the aversion; and when, by the peculiarity of his style, she found out that he teized her by writing in the newspapers concerning battles and plots which had no existence, only to feed her with new accounts of the division of Poland perhaps, or the disputes between the states of Russia and Turkey, she was exceedingly angry to be sure, and scarcely I think forgave the offence till the domestic distresses of the year 1772 reconciled them to and taught them the true value of each other; excellent as *they both* were, far beyond the excellence of any other man and woman I ever yet saw. As her conduct too extorted his truest esteem, her cruel illness excited all his tenderness; nor was the sight of beauty, scarce to be subdued by disease, and wit, flashing through the apprehension of evil, a scene which Dr. Johnson could see without sensibility. He acknowledged himself improved by her piety, and astonished at her fortitude, and hung over her bed with the affection of a parent, and the reverence of a son. Nor did it give me less pleasure to see her sweet mind cleared of all its latent prejudices, and left at liberty to admire and applaud that force of thought and versatility of genius, that comprehensive soul and benevo-









lent heart which attracted and commanded veneration from all, but inspired peculiar sensations of delight mixed with reverence in those who, like her, had the opportunity to observe these qualities, stimulated by gratitude, and actuated by friendship. When Mr. Thrale's perplexities disturbed his peace, dear Dr. Johnson left him scarce a moment, and tried every artifice to amuse as well as every argument to console him: nor is it more possible to describe than to forget his prudent, his pious attentions towards the man who had some years before certainly saved his valuable life, perhaps his reason, by half obliging him to change the foul air of Fleet-street for the wholesome breezes of the Sussex Downs.

The epitaph engraved on my mother's monument shews how deserving she was of general applause. I asked Johnson why he named her person before her mind: he said it was, "because every body could judge of the one, and but few of the other."

"*Juxta sepulta est* HESTERA MARIA
Thomæ Cotton de Combermere baronetti Cestriensis filia,
Johannis Salusbury armigeri Flintiensis uxor.
Forma felix, felix ingenio;
Omnibus jucunda, suorum amantissima.
Linguis artibusque ita exculta
Ut loquenti nunquam deessent
Sermonis nitor, sententiarum flosculi,
Sapientiæ gravitas, leporum gratia:
Modum servandi adeo perita,
Ut domestica inter negotia litteris oblectaretur

The daughter of Sir Thomas Cotton of Combermere, in the county of Cheshire, Bart. the wife of
John Salusbury,
of the county of Flint, Esquire. She was born in the year 1707, married in 1739, and died in 1773.

A pleasing form, where every grace combin'd,
With genius blest, a pure enlighten'd mind;
Benevolence on all that smiles bestow'd,
A heart that for her friends with love o'erflow'd:
In language skill'd, by science form'd to please,
Her mirth was wit, her gravity was ease.
Graceful in all, the happy mien she knew,
Which even to virtue gives the limits due;
Whate'er employ'd her, that she seem'd to chuse,
Her house, her friends, her business, or the muse.
Admir'd and lov'd, the theme of general praise,
All to such virtue wish'd a length of days:
But sad reverse! with slow-consuming pains,
Th' envenom'd cancer revell'd in her veins;
Prey'd on her spirits—stole each power away;
Gradual she sunk, yet smiling in decay;
She smil'd in hope, by sore afflictions try'd,
And in that hope the pious Christian died."

The following epitaph on Mr. Thrale, who has now a monument close by her's in Streatham church, I have seen printed and commended in Maty's Review for April 1784; and a friend has favoured me with the translation.

Hic conditur quod reliquum est
HENRICI THRALE,
Qui res seu civiles, seu domesticas, ita egit,
Ut vitam illi longiorem multi optarent;
Ita sacras,
Ut quam brevem esset habiturus præscire videretur;
Simplex, apertus, sibique semper similis,
Nihil ostentavit aut arte fictum aut cura
Elaboratum.
In senatu, regi patriæque
Fideliter studuit;
Vulgi obstrepentis contemptor animosus,
Domi inter mille mercaturæ negotia
Literarum elegantiam minimè neglexit.
Amicis quocunque modo laborantibus,
Conciliis, auctoritate, muneribus adfuit.
Inter familiares, comites, convivas, hospites,
Tam facili fuit morum suavitate
Ut omnium animos ad se alliceret;
Tam felici sermonis libertate

Ut nulli adulatus, omnibus placeret.
Natus 1724. *Ob.* 1781.
Consortes tumuli habet Rodolphum patrem, strenuum fortemque virum, et Henricum filium unicum, quem spei parentum mors inopina decennem præripuit.
Ita
Domus felix et opulenta, quam erexit
Avus, auxitque pater, cum nepote decidit.
Abi viator!
Et vicibus rerum humanarum perspectis,
Æternitatem cogita!"

"Here are deposited the remains of
HENRY THRALE,
Who managed all his concerns in the present
world, public and private, in such a manner
as to leave many wishing he had continued
longer in it;
And all that related to a future world,
as if he had been sensible how short a time he
was to continue in this.
Simple, open, and uniform in his manners,
his conduct was without either art or affectation.
In the senate steadily attentive to the true interests
of his king and country,
He looked down with contempt on the clamours
of the multitude:
Though engaged in a very extensive business,
He found some time to apply to polite literature:
And was ever ready to assist his friends
labouring under any difficulties,
with his advice, his influence, and his purse.
To his friends, acquaintance, and guests,
he behaved with such sweetness of manners
as to attach them all to his person:
So happy in his conversation with them,
as to please all, though he flattered none.
He was born in the year 1724, and died in 1781.
In the same tomb lie interred his father
Ralph Thrale, a man of vigour and activity,
And his only son Henry, who died before his father,
Aged ten years.
Thus a happy and opulent family,
Raised by the grandfather, and augmented by the
father, became extinguished with the grandson.
Go, Reader!
And reflecting on the vicissitudes of
all human affairs,
Meditate on eternity.

I never recollect to have heard that Dr. Johnson wrote inscriptions for any sepulchral stones, except Dr. Goldsmith's in Westminster abbey, and these two in Streatham church. He made four lines once on the death of poor Hogarth, which were equally true and pleasing: I know not why Garrick's were preferred to them.

"The hand of him here torpid lies,
That drew th' essential form of grace;
Here clos'd in death th' attentive eyes,
That saw the manners in the face."

Mr. Hogarth, among the variety of kindnesses shewn to me when I was too young to have a proper sense of them, was used to be very earnest that I should obtain the acquaintance, and if possible the friendship of Dr. Johnson, whose conversation was to the talk of other men, like Titian's painting compared to Hudson's, he said: but don't you tell people now, that I say so (continued he), for the connoisseurs and I are at war you know; and because I hate *them*, they think I hate *Titian*—and let them! Many were indeed the lectures I used to have in my very early days from dear Mr. Hogarth, whose regard for my father induced him perhaps to take notice of his little girl, and give her some odd particular directions about dress, dancing, and many other matters, interesting now only because they were his. As he made all his talents, however, subservient to the great purposes of morality, and the earnest desire he had to mend mankind, his discourse commonly ended in an ethical dissertation, and a serious charge to me, never to forget his picture of the *Lady's last Stake*. Of Dr. Johnson, when my father and he were talking together about him one day: That man (says Hogarth) is not contented with believing the Bible, but he fairly resolves, I think, to believe nothing *but* the Bible. Johnson (added he), though so wise a fellow, is more like king David than king Solomon; for he says in his haste that all men are liars. This charge, as I afterwards came to know, was but too well founded: Mr. Johnson's incredulity amounted almost to disease, and I have seen it mortify his companions exceedingly. But the truth is, Mr. Thrale had a very powerful influence over the Doctor, and could make him suppress many rough answers: he could likewise prevail on him to change his shirt, his coat, or his plate, almost before it came indispensably necessary to the comfortable feelings of his friends: But as I never had any ascendency at all over Mr. Johnson, except just in the things that concerned his health, it grew extremely perplexing and

difficult to live in the house with him when the master of it was no more; the worse indeed, because his dislikes grew capricious; and he could scarce bear to have any body come to the house whom it was absolutely necessary for me to see. Two gentlemen, I perfectly well remember, dining with us at Streatham in the summer 1782, when Elliot's brave defence of Gibraltar was a subject of common discourse, one of these men naturally enough begun some talk about red-hot balls thrown with surprising dexterity and effect: which Dr. Johnson having listened some time to, "I would advise you, Sir (said he with a cold sneer), never to relate this story again: you really can scarce imagine how *very poor* a figure you make in the telling of it." Our guest being bred a Quaker, and I believe a man of an extremely gentle disposition, needed no more reproofs for the same folly; so if he ever did speak again, it was in a low voice to the friend who came with him. The check was given before dinner, and after coffee I left the room. When in the evening however our companions were returned to London, and Mr. Johnson and myself were left alone, with only our usual family about us, "I did not quarrel with those Quaker fellows," (said he, very seriously.) You did perfectly right, replied I; for they gave you no cause of offence. "No offence! (returned he with an altered voice;) and is it nothing then to sit whispering together when *I* am present, without ever directing their discourse towards me, or offering me a share in the conversation?" That was, because you frighted him who spoke first about those hot balls. "Why, Madam, if a creature is neither capable of giving dignity to

Among the numberless people however whom I heard him grossly and flatly contradict, I never yet saw any one who did not take it patiently excepting Dr. Burney, from whose habitual softness of manners I little expected such an exertion of spirit: the event was as little to be expected. Mr. Johnson asked his pardon generously and genteelly, and when he left the room rose up to shake hands with him, that they might part in peace. On another occasion, when he had violently provoked Mr. Pepys, in a different but perhaps not a less offensive manner, till something much too like a quarrel was grown up between them, the moment he was gone, "Now (says Dr. Johnson) is Pepys gone home hating me, who love him better than I did before: he spoke in defence of his dead friend; but though I hope *I* spoke better who spoke against him, yet all my eloquence will gain me nothing but an honest man for my enemy!" He did not however cordially love Mr. Pepys, though he respected his abilities. "I knew the dog was a scholar (said he, when they had been disputing about the classics for three hours together one morning at Streatham); but that he had so much taste and so much knowledge I did *not* believe: I might have taken Barnard's word though, for Barnard would not lie."

We had got a little French print among us at Brighthelmstone, in November 1782, of some people skaiting, with these lines written under:

> "*Sur un mince chrystal l'hyver conduit leurs pas,*
> *Le precipice est sous la glace;*
> *Telle est de nos plaisirs la legere surface,*
> *Glissez mortels; n'appayez pas.*"

And I begged translations from every body: Dr. Johnson gave me this;

> "O'er ice the rapid skaiter flies,
> With sport above and death below;
> Where mischief lurks in gay disguise,
> Thus lightly touch and quickly go."

He was however most exceedingly enraged when he knew that in the course of the season I had asked half a dozen acquaintance to do the same thing; and said, it was a piece of treachery, and done to make every body else look little when compared to my favourite friends the *Pepyses*, whose translations were unquestionably the best. I will insert them, because he *did* say so. This is the distich given me by Sir Lucas, to whom I owe more solid obligations, no less than the power of thanking him for the life he saved, and whose least valuable praise is the correctness of his taste:

"O'er the ice as o'er pleasure you lightly should glide,
Both have gulphs which their flattering surfaces hide."

This other more serious one was written by his brother:

"Swift o'er the level how the skaiters slide,
And skim the glitt'ring surface as they go:
Thus o'er life's specious pleasures lightly glide,
But pause not, press not on the gulph below."

Dr. Johnson seeing this last, and thinking a moment, repeated,

"O'er crackling ice, o'er gulphs profound,
With nimble glide the skaiters play;
O'er treacherous pleasure's flow'ry ground
Thus lightly skim, and haste away."

Though thus uncommonly ready both to give and take offence, Mr. Johnson had many rigid maxims concerning the necessity of continued softness and compliance of disposition: and when I once mentioned Shenstone's idea, that some little quarrel among lovers, relations, and friends was useful, and contributed to their general happiness upon the whole, by making the soul feel her elastic force, and return to the beloved object with renewed delight:—"Why, what a pernicious maxim is this now (cries Johnson), *all* quarrels ought to be avoided studiously, particularly conjugal ones, as no one can possibly tell where they may end; besides that lasting dislike is often the consequence of occasional disgust, and that the cup of life is surely bitter enough without squeezing in the hateful rind of resentment."

of neatness in her dress and furniture, as many ladies do, till they become troublesome to their best friends, slaves to their own besoms, and only sigh for the hour of sweeping their husbands out of the house as dirt and useless lumber: a clean floor is *so* comfortable, she would say sometimes, by way of twitting; till at last I told her, that I thought we had had talk enough about the *floor*, we would now have a touch at the *cieling*."

On another occasion I have heard him blame her for a fault many people have, of setting the miseries of their neighbours half unintentionally half wantonly before their eyes, shewing them the bad side of their profession, situation, &c. He said, "she would lament the dependence of pupillage to a young heir, &c. and once told a waterman who rowed her along the Thames in a wherry, that he was no happier than a galley-slave, one being chained to the oar by authority, the other by want. I had however (said he, laughing), the wit to get her daughter on my side always before we began the dispute. She read comedy better than any body he ever heard (he said); in tragedy she mouthed too much."

Garrick told Mr. Thrale however, that she was a little painted puppet, of no value at all, and quite disguised with affectation, full of odd airs of rural elegance; and he made out some comical scenes, by mimicking her in a dialogue he pretended to have overheard: I do not know whether he meant such stuff to be believed or no, it was so comical; nor did I indeed ever see him represent her ridiculously, though my husband did. The intelligence I gained of her from old Levett, was only perpetual illness and perpetual opium. The picture I found of her at Litchfield was very pretty, and her daughter Mrs. Lucy Porter said it was like. Mr. Johnson has told me, that her hair was eminently beautiful, quite *blonde* like that of a baby; but that she fretted about the colour, and was always desirous to dye it black, which he very judiciously hindered her from doing. His account of their wedding we used to think ludicrous enough—"I was riding to church (says Johnson), and she following on another single horse: she hung back however, and I turned about to see whether she could get her steed along, or what was the matter. I had however soon occasion to see it was only coquetry, and *that I despised*, so quickening my pace a little, she mended hers; but I believe there was a tear or two——pretty dear creature!"

Johnson loved his dinner exceedingly, and has often said in my hearing, perhaps for my edification, "that wherever the dinner is ill got there is poverty, or there is avarice, or there is stupidity; in short,

the family is somehow grossly wrong; for (continued he) a man seldom thinks with more earnestness of any thing than he does of his dinner; and if he cannot get that well dressed, he should be suspected of inaccuracy in other things." One day when he was speaking upon the subject, I asked him, if he ever huffed his wife about his dinner? "So often (replied he), that at last she called to me, and said, Nay, hold Mr. Johnson, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will protest not eatable."

When any disputes arose between our married acquaintance however, Mr. Johnson always sided with the husband, "whom (he said) the woman had probably provoked so often, she scarce knew when or how she had disobliged him first. Women (says Dr. Johnson) give great offence by a contemptuous spirit of non-compliance on petty occasions. The man calls his wife to walk with him in the shade, and she feels a strange desire just at that moment to sit in the sun: he offers to read her a play, or sing her a song, and she calls the children in to disturb them, or advises him to seize that opportunity of settling the family accounts. Twenty such tricks will the faithfullest wife in the world not refuse to play, and then look astonished when the fellow fetches in a mistress. Boarding-schools were established (continued he) for the conjugal quiet of the parents: the two partners cannot agree which child to fondle, nor how to fondle them, so they put the young ones to school, and remove the cause of contention. The little girl pokes her head, the mother reproves her sharply: Do not mind your mamma, says the father, my dear, but do your own [redacted]

the Clown's answer in As you like it,[1] of "Oh Lord, Sir!" for that it suited every occasion. One man, for example, was profligate and wild, as we call it, followed the girls, or sat still at the gaming-table. "Why, life must be filled up (says Johnson), and the man who is not capable of intellectual pleasures must content himself with such as his senses can afford." Another was a hoarder: "Why, a fellow must do something; and what so easy to a narrow mind as hoarding halfpence till they turn into sixpences."—Avarice was a vice against which, however, I never much heard Mr. Johnson declaim, till one represented it to him connected with cruelty, or some such disgraceful companion. "Do not (said he) discourage your children from hoarding, if they have a taste to it: whoever lays up his penny rather than part with it for a cake, at least is not the slave of gross appetite; and shews besides a preference always to be esteemed, of the future to the present moment. Such a mind may be made a good one; but the natural spendthrift, who grasps his pleasures greedily and coarsely, and cares for nothing but immediate indulgence, is very little to be valued above a negro." We talked of Lady Tavistock, who grieved herself to death for the loss of her husband—"She was rich and wanted employment (says Johnson), so she cried till she lost all power of restraining her tears: other women are forced to outlive their husbands, who were just as much beloved, depend on it; but they have no time for grief: and I doubt not, if we had put my Lady Tavistock into a small chandler's shop, and given her a nurse-child to tend, her life would have been saved. The poor and the busy have no leisure for sentimental sorrow." We were speaking of a gentleman who loved his friend—"Make him prime minister (says Johnson) and see how long his friend will be remembered." But he had a rougher answer for me, when I commended a sermon preached by an intimate acquaintance of our own at the trading end of the town. "What was the subject, Madam (says Dr. Johnson)?" Friendship, Sir (replied I). "Why now, is it not strange that a wise man, like our dear little Evans, should take it in his head to preach on such a subject, in a place where no one can be thinking of it?" Why, what are they thinking upon, Sir (said I)? "Why, the men are thinking on their money I suppose, and the women are thinking of their mops."

Dr. Johnson's knowledge and esteem of what we call low or coarse life was indeed prodigious; and he did not like that the upper ranks should be dignified with the name of *the world*. Sir Joshua Reynolds

[1] An error of memory for All's well that ends well.—*Ed.*

said one day, that nobody *wore* laced coats now; and that once every body wore them. "See now (says Johnson) how absurd that is; as if the bulk of mankind consisted of fine gentlemen that came to him to sit for their pictures. If every man who wears a laced coat (that he can pay for) was extirpated, who would miss them?" With all this haughty contempt of gentility, no praise was more welcome to Dr. Johnson than that which said he had the notions or manners of a gentleman: which character I have heard him define with accuracy, and describe with elegance. "Officers (he said) were falsely supposed to have the carriage of gentlemen; whereas no profession left a stronger brand behind it than that of a soldier; and it was the essence of a gentleman's character to bear the visible mark of no profession whatever." He once named Mr. Berenger as the standard of true elegance; but some one objecting that he too much resembled the gentleman in Congreve's comedies, Mr. Johnson said, "We must fix then upon the famous Thomas Hervey, whose manners were polished even to acuteness and brilliancy, though he lost but little in solid power of reasoning, and in genuine force of mind." Mr. Johnson had however an avowed and scarcely limited partiality for all who bore the name or boasted the alliance of an Aston or a Hervey; and when Mr. Thrale once asked him which had been the happiest period of his past life? he replied, "it was that year in which he spent one whole evening with M——y As——n. That indeed (said he) was not happiness, it was rapture; but the thoughts of it sweetened the whole year." I must add, that the evening alluded to was not passed *tête-*

pany with two or three friends in the country, she made the wench look at my hand, but soon repented her curiosity; for (says the gipsey) Your heart is divided, Sir, between a Betty and a Molly: Betty loves you best, but you take most delight in Molly's company: when I turned about to laugh, I saw my wife was crying. Pretty charmer! she had no reason!"

It was, I believe, long after the currents of life had driven him to a great distance from this lady, that he spent much of his time with Mrs. F—zh—b—t, of whom he always spoke with esteem and tenderness, and with a veneration very difficult to deserve. "That woman (said he) loved her husband as we hope and desire to be loved by our guardian angel. F—tz—h—b—t was a gay good-humoured fellow, generous of his money and of his meat, and desirous of nothing but cheerful society among people distinguished in *some* way, in *any way* I think; for Rousseau and St. Austin would have been equally welcome to his table and to his kindness: the lady however was of another way of thinking; her first care was to preserve her husband's soul from corruption; her second, to keep his estate entire for their children: and I owed my good reception in the family to the idea she had entertained, that I was fit company for F—tzh—b—t, whom I loved extremely. They dare not (said she) swear, and take other conversation-liberties before *you*." I asked if her husband returned her regard? "He felt her influence too powerfully (replied Mr. Johnson): no man will be fond of what forces him daily to feel himself inferior. She stood at the door of her Paradise in Derbyshire, like the angel with the flaming sword, to keep the devil at a distance. But she was not immortal, poor dear! she died, and her husband felt at once afflicted and released." I enquired if she was handsome? "She would have been handsome for a queen (replied the panegyrist); her beauty had more in it of majesty than of attraction, more of the dignity of virtue than the vivacity of wit." The friend of this lady, Miss B—thby, succeeded her in the management of Mr. F—tzh—b—t's family, and in the esteem of Dr. Johnson; though he told me she pushed her piety to bigotry, her devotion to enthusiasm; that she somewhat disqualified herself for the duties of *this* life, by her perpetual aspirations after the *next*: such was however the purity of her mind, he said, and such the graces of her manner, that Lord Lyttelton and he used to strive for her preference with an emulation that occasioned hourly disgust, and ended in lasting animosity. "You may see (said he to me, when the Poets Lives were printed) that dear B—thby is at my heart still. She *would* delight in that fellow Lyttel-

ton's company though, all that I could do: and I cannot forgive even his memory the preference given by a mind like her's." I have heard Baretti say, that when this lady died, Dr. Johnson was almost distracted with his grief; and that the friends about him had much ado to calm the violence of his emotion. Dr. Taylor too related once to Mr. Thrale and me, that when he lost his wife, the negro Francis ran away, though in the middle of the night, to Westminster, to fetch Dr. Taylor to his master, who was all but wild with excess of sorrow, and scarce knew him when he arrived: after some minutes however, the Doctor proposed their going to prayers, as the only rational method of calming the disorder this misfortune had occasioned in both their spirits. Time, and resignation to the will of God, cured every breach in his heart before I made acquaintance with him, though he always persisted in saying he never rightly recovered the loss of his wife. It is in allusion to her that he records the observation of a female critic, as he calls her, in Gay's Life; and the lady of great beauty and elegance, mentioned in the criticisms upon Pope's epitaphs, was Miss Molly Aston. The person spoken of in his strictures upon Young's poetry, is the writer of these Anecdotes, to whom he likewise addressed the following verses when he was in the Isle of Sky with Mr. Boswell. The letters written in his journey, I used to tell him, were better than the printed book; and he was not displeased at my having taken the pains to copy them all over. Here is the Latin ode:

"Permeo terras, ubi nuda rupes
Saxeas miscet nebulis ruinas,
Torva ubi rident steriles coloni

On another occasion I can boast verses from Dr. Johnson.—As I went into his room the morning of my birth-day once, and said to him, Nobody sends me any verses now, because I am five-and-thirty years old; and Stella was fed with them till forty-six, I remember. My being just recovered from illness and confinement will account for the manner in which he burst out suddenly, for so he did without the least previous hesitation whatsoever, and without having entertained the smallest intention towards it half a minute before:

"Oft in danger, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five.
Could philosophers contrive
Life to stop at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
High to soar, and deep to dive,
Nature gives at thirty-five.
Ladies, stock and tend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five:
For howe'er we boast and strive,
Life declines from thirty-five:
He that ever hopes to thrive
Must begin by thirty-five;
And all who wisely wish to wive,
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five."

"And now (said he, as I was writing them down), you may see what it is to come for poetry to a Dictionary-maker; you may observe that the rhymes run in alphabetical order exactly."—And so they do.

Mr. Johnson did indeed possess an almost Tuscan power of improvisation: when he called to my daughter, who was consulting with a friend about a new gown and dressed hat she thought of wearing to an assembly, thus suddenly, while she hoped he was not listening to their conversation,

"Wear the gown, and wear the hat,
Snatch thy pleasures while they last;
Hadst thou nine lives like a cat,
Soon those nine lives would be past."

It is impossible to deny to such little sallies the power of the Florentines, who do not permit their verses to be ever written down though they often deserve it, because, as they express it, *così se perderebbe la poca gloria.*

As for translations, we used to make him sometimes run off with one or two in a good humour. He was praising this song of Metastasio,

"Deh, se piacermi vuoi,
Lascia i sospetti tuoi,
Non mi turbar conquesto
Molesto dubitar:
Chi ciecamente crede,
Impegna a serbar fede;
Chi sempre inganno aspetta,
Alletta ad ingannar."

"Should you like it in English (said he) thus?"

"Would you hope to gain my heart,
Bid your teizing doubts depart;
He who blindly trusts, will find
Faith from every generous mind:
He who still expects deceit,
Only teaches how to cheat."

Mr. Baretti coaxed him likewise one day at Streatham out of a translation of Emirena's speech to the false courtier Aquileius, and it is probably printed before now, as I think two or three people took copies; but perhaps it has slipt their memories.

"Ah! tu in corte invecchiasti, e giurerei
Che fra i pochi non sei tenace ancora
Dell' antica onestà: quando bisogna,
Saprai sereno in volto
Vezzeggiare un nemico; acciò vi cada,

And drive discountenanc'd virtue from the throne:
That leave the blame of rigour to the prince,
And of his every gift usurp the merit;
That hide in seeming zeal a wicked purpose,
And only build upon another's ruin."

These characters Dr. Johnson however did not delight in reading, or in hearing of: he always maintained that the world was not half as wicked as it was represented; and he might very well continue in that opinion, as he resolutely drove from him every story that could make him change it; and when Mr. Bickerstaff's flight[1] confirmed the report of his guilt, and my husband said in answer to Johnson's astonishment, that he had long been a suspected man: "By those who look close to the ground, dirt will be seen, Sir, (was the lofty reply): I hope I see things from a greater distance."

His desire to go abroad, particularly to see Italy, was very great; and he had a longing wish to leave some Latin verses at the Grand Chartreux. He loved indeed the very act of travelling, and I cannot tell how far one might have taken him in a carriage before he would have wished for refreshment. He was therefore in some respects an admirable companion on the road, as he piqued himself upon feeling no inconvenience, and on despising no accommodations. On the other hand however, he expected no one else to feel any, and felt exceedingly inflamed with anger if any one complained of the rain, the sun, or the dust. "How (said he) do other people bear them?" As for general uneasiness, or complaints of long confinement in a carriage, he considered all lamentations on their account as proofs of an empty head, and a tongue desirous to talk without materials of conversation. "A mill that goes without grist (said he), is as good a companion as such creatures."

I pitied a friend before him, who had a whining wife that found every thing painful to her, and nothing pleasing—"He does not know that she whimpers (says Johnson); when a door has creaked for a fortnight together, you may observe—the master will scarcely give sixpence to get it oiled."

Of another lady, more insipid than offensive, I once heard him say, "She has some softness indeed, but so has a pillow." And when one observed in reply, that her husband's fidelity and attachment were exemplary, notwithstanding this low account at which her perfections were rated—"Why Sir (cries the Doctor), being married to those sleepy-souled women, is just like playing at cards for nothing: no

[1] See Life, vol. i., p. 480.

passion is excited, and the time is filled up. I do not however envy a fellow one of those honey-suckle wives for my part, as they are but *creepers* at best, and commonly destroy the tree they so tenderly cling about."

For a lady of quality, since dead, who received us at her husband's seat in Wales with less attention than he had long been accustomed to, he had a rougher denunciation: "That woman (cries Johnson) is like sour small-beer, the beverage of her table, and produce of the wretched country she lives in: like that, she could never have been a good thing, and even that bad thing is spoiled." This was in the same vein of asperity, and I believe with something like the same provocation, that he observed of a Scotch lady, "that she resembled a dead nettle; were she alive (said he) she would sting."

Mr. Johnson's hatred of the Scotch is so well known, and so many of his *bons mots* expressive of that hatred have been already repeated in so many books and pamphlets, that 'tis perhaps scarcely worth while to write down the conversation between him and a friend of that nation who always resides in London, and who at his return from the Hebrides asked him with a firm tone of voice, What he thought of his country? "That it is a very vile country to be sure, Sir;" (returned for answer Dr. Johnson.) Well, Sir! replies the other somewhat mortified, God made it. "Certainly he did (answers Mr. Johnson again); but we must always remember that he made it for Scotchmen, and comparisons are odious, Mr. S——; but God made hell."

Dr. Johnson did not I think much delight in that kind of conver-

at once so elegant, so apparently artless, so pure, and so pleasing, it seemed a perpetual stream of sentiment, enlivened by gaiety, and sparkling with images." When I asked Dr. Johnson, who was the *best* man he had ever known? "Psalmanazar," was the unexpected reply: he said, likewise, "that though a native of France, as his friend imagined, he possessed more of the English language, than any one of the other foreigners who had separately fallen in his way." Though there was much esteem however, there was I believe but little confidence between them; they conversed merely about general topics, religion and learning, of which both were undoubtedly stupendous examples; and, with regard to true Christian perfection, I have heard Johnson say, "That George Psalmanazar's piety, penitence, and virtue exceeded almost what we read as wonderful even in the lives of saints."

I forget in what year it was that this extraordinary person lived and died at a house in Old-street, where Mr. Johnson was witness to his talents and virtues, and to his final preference of the church of England, after having studied, disgraced, and adorned so many modes of worship. The name he went by, was not supposed by his friend to be that of his family, but all enquiries were vain; his reasons for concealing his original were penitentiary; he deserved no other name than that of the impostor, he said. That portion of the Universal History which was written by him, does not seem to me to be composed with peculiar spirit, but all traces of the wit and the wanderer were probably worn out before he undertook the work.—His pious and patient endurance of a tedious illness, ending in an exemplary death, confirmed the strong impression his merit had made upon the mind of Mr. Johnson. "It is so *very* difficult (said he, always) for a sick man not to be a scoundrel. Oh! set the pillows soft, here is Mr. Grumbler o'coming: Ah! let no air in for the world, Mr. Grumbler will be here presently."

This perpetual preference is so offensive, where the privileges of sickness are besides supported by wealth, and nourished by dependence, that one cannot much wonder that a rough mind is revolted by them. It was however at once comical and *touchant* (as the French call it), to observe Mr. Johnson so habitually watchful against this sort of behaviour, that he was often ready to suspect himself of it; and when one asked him gently, how he did?—"Ready to become a scoundrel, Madam (would commonly be the answer): with a little more spoiling you will, I think, make me a complete rascal."

His desire of doing good was not however lessened by his aversion

to a sick chamber: he would have made an ill man well by any expence or fatigue of his own, sooner than any of the canters. Canter indeed was he none: he would forget to ask people after the health of their nearest relations, and say in excuse, "That he knew they did not care: why should they (says he)? every one in this world has as much as they can do in caring for themselves, and few have leisure really to *think* of their neighbours distresses, however they may delight their tongues with *talking* of them."

The natural depravity of mankind and remains of original sin were so fixed in Mr. Johnson's opinion, that he was indeed a most acute observer of their effects; and used to say sometimes, half in jest, half in earnest, that they were the remains of his old tutor Mandeville's instructions. As a book however, he took care always loudly to condemn the Fable of the Bees, but not without adding, "that it was the work of a thinking man."

I have in former days heard Dr. Collier of the Commons loudly condemned for uttering sentiments, which twenty years after I have heard as loudly applauded from the lips of Dr. Johnson, concerning the well-known writer of that celebrated work: but if people will live long enough in this capricious world, such instances of partiality will shock them less and less, by frequent repetition. Mr. Johnson knew mankind, and wished to mend them: he therefore, to the piety and pure religion, the untainted integrity, and scrupulous morals of my earliest and most disinterested friend, judiciously contrived to join a cautious attention to the capacity of his hearers, and a prudent resolution not to lessen the influence of his learning and virtue, by

strength hindered him from continuing the contest. He used to remind me always of that verse in Berni,

"Il pover uomo che non sen' èra accorto,
Andava combattendo—ed era morto."

Mr. Johnson made him a comical answer one day, when seeming to repine at the success of Beattie's Essay on Truth—"Here's such a stir (said he) about a fellow that has written one book, and I have written many." Ah, Doctor (says his friend), there go two-and-forty sixpences you know to one guinea.

They had spent an evening with Eaton Graham too, I remember hearing it was at some tavern; his heart was open, and he began inviting away; told what he could do to make his college agreeable, and begged the visit might not be delayed. Goldsmith thanked him, and proposed setting out with Mr. Johnson for Buckinghamshire in a fortnight; "Nay hold, Dr. *Minor* (says the other), I did not invite you."

Many such mortifications arose in the course of their intimacy to be sure, but few more laughable than when the newspapers had tacked them together as the pedant and his flatterer in "Love's Labour lost." Dr. Goldsmith came to his friend, fretting and foaming, and vowing vengeance against the printer, &c. till Mr. Johnson, tired of the bustle, and desirous to think of something else, cried out at last, "Why, what would'st thou have, dear Doctor! who the plague is hurt with all this nonsense? and how is a man the worse I wonder in his health, purse, or character, for being called *Holofernes?*" I do not know (replies the other) how you may relish being called Holofernes, but I do not like at least to play *Goodman Dull.*

Dr. Johnson was indeed famous for disregarding public abuse. When the people criticised and answered his pamphlets, papers, &c. "Why now, these fellows are only advertising my book (he would say); it is surely better a man should be abused than forgotten." When Churchill nettled him however, it is certain he felt the sting, or that poet's works would hardly have been left out of the edition. Of that however I have no right to decide; the booksellers perhaps did not put Churchill on their list. I know Mr. Johnson was exceedingly zealous to declare how very little he had to do with the selection. Churchill's works too might possibly be rejected by him upon a higher principle; the highest indeed, if he was inspired by the same laudable motive which made him reject every authority for a word in his dictionary that could only be gleaned from writers dan-

gerous to religion or morality—"I would not (said he) send people to look for words in a book, that by such a casual seizure of the mind might chance to mislead it for ever." In consequence of this delicacy, Mrs. Montague once observed, That were an angel to give the *imprimatur*, Dr. Johnson's works were among those very few which would not be lessened by a line. That such praise from such a lady should delight him, is not strange; insensibility in a case like that, must have been the result alone of arrogance acting on stupidity. Mr. Johnson had indeed no dislike to the commendations which he knew he deserved: "What signifies protesting so against flattery (would he cry)! when a person speaks well of one, it must be either true or false, you know; if true, let us rejoice in his good opinion; if he lies, it is a proof at least that he loves more to please me, than to sit silent when he need say nothing."

That natural roughness of his manner, so often mentioned, would, notwithstanding the regularity of his notions, burst through them all from time to time; and he once bade a very celebrated lady, who praised him with too much zeal perhaps, or perhaps too strong an emphasis (which always offended him), "consider what her flattery was worth before she choaked *him* with it."[1] A few more winters passed in the talking world showed him the value of that friend's commendations however; and he was very sorry for the disgusting speech he made her.

I used to think Mr. Johnson's determined preference of a cold monotonous talker over an emphatical and violent one, would make him quite a favourite among the men of *ton*, whose insensibility, or

highly, fell a sacrifice to their insults, having declared on his death-bed to Dr. Johnson, that the pain of an anonymous letter, written in some of the common prints of the day, fastened on his heart, and threw him into the slow fever of which he died.

Nor was Cummyns the only valuable member so lost to society: Hawkesworth, the pious, the virtuous, and the wise, for want of that fortitude which casts a shield before the merits of his friend, fell a lamented sacrifice to wanton malice and cruelty, I know not how provoked; but all in turn feel the lash of censure in a country where, as every baby is allowed to carry a whip, no person can escape except by chance. The unpublished crimes, unknown distresses, and even death itself, however, daily occurring in less liberal governments and less free nations, soon teach one to content one's self with such petty grievances, and make one acknowledge that the undistinguishing severity of newspaper abuse may in some measure diminish the diffusion of vice and folly in Great Britain, and while they fright delicate minds into forced refinements and affected insipidity, they are useful to the great causes of virtue in the soul, and liberty in the state; and though sensibility often sinks under the roughness of their prescriptions, it would be no good policy to take away their licence.

Knowing the state of Mr. Johnson's nerves, and how easily they were affected, I forbore reading in a new Magazine one day, the death of a Samuel Johnson who expired that month; but my companion snatching up the book, saw it himself, and contrary to my expectation—"Oh (said he)! I hope Death will now be glutted with Sam. Johnsons, and let me alone for some time to come: I read of another namesake's departure last week."—Though Mr. Johnson was commonly affected even to agony at the thoughts of a friend's dying, he troubled himself very little with the complaints they might make to him about ill health. "Dear Doctor (said he one day to a common acquaintance, who lamented the tender state of his *inside*), do not be like the spider, man; and spin conversation thus incessantly out of thy own bowels."—I told him of another friend who suffered grievously with the gout—"He will live a vast many years for all that (replied he), and then what signifies how much he suffers! but he will die at last, poor fellow, there's the misery; gout seldom takes the fort by a coup-de-main, but turning the siege into a blockade, obliges it to surrender at discretion."

A lady he thought well of, was disordered in her health—"What help has she called in (enquired Johnson)?" Dr. James, Sir; was the reply. "What is her disease?" Oh, nothing positive, rather a

gradual and gentle decline. "She will die then, pretty dear (answered he)! When Death's pale horse runs away with a person on full speed, an active physician may possibly give them a turn; but if he carries them on an even slow pace, down hill too! no care nor skill can save them!"

When Garrick was on his last sick-bed, no arguments, or recitals of such facts as I had heard, would persuade Mr. Johnson of his danger: he had prepossessed himself with a notion, that to say a man was sick, was very near wishing him so; and few things offended him more, than prognosticating even the death of an ordinary acquaintance. "Ay, ay (said he), Swift knew the world pretty well, when he said, that

> "Some dire misfortune to portend,
> No enemy can match a friend."

The danger then of Mr. Garrick, or of Mr. Thrale, whom he loved better, was an image which no one durst present before his view; he always persisted in the possibility and hope of their recovering disorders from which no human creatures by human means alone ever did recover. His distress for their loss was for that very reason poignant to excess; but his fears of his own salvation were excessive: his truly tolerant spirit, and Christian charity, which *hopeth all things*, and *believeth all things*, made him rely securely on the safety of his friends, while his earnest aspiration after a blessed immortality made him cautious of his own steps, and timorous concerning their consequences. He knew how much had been given, and filled his mind with fancies of how much would be required, till his impressed imagi-

his senses would change the last for the first: such hope is a mere bubble, that by a gentle breath may be blown to what size you will almost, but a rough blast bursts it at once. Hope is an amusement rather than a good, and adapted to none but very tranquil minds." The truth is, Mr. Johnson hated what we call unprofitable chat; and to a gentleman who had disserted some time about the natural history of the mouse—"I wonder what such a one would have said (cried Johnson), if he had ever had the luck to see a *lion!*"

I well remember that at Brighthelmstone once, when he was not present, Mr. Beauclerc asserted that he was afraid of spirits; and I, who was secretly offended at the charge, asked him, the first opportunity I could find, What ground he had ever given to the world for such a report? "I can (replied he) recollect nothing nearer it, than my telling Dr. Lawrence many years ago, that a long time after my poor mother's death, I heard her voice call *Sam!*" What answer did the Doctor make to your story, Sir, said I? "None in the world," (replied he;) and suddenly changed the conversation. Now as Mr. Johnson had a most unshaken faith, without any mixture of credulity, this story must either have been strictly true, or his persuasion of its truth the effect of disordered spirits. I relate the anecdote precisely as he told it me; but could not prevail on him to draw out the talk into length for further satisfaction of my curiosity.

As Johnson was the firmest of believers without being credulous, so he was the most charitable of mortals without being what we call an active friend.[1] Admirable at giving counsel, no man saw his way so clearly; but he would not stir a finger for the assistance of those to whom he was willing enough to give advice: besides that, he had principles of laziness, and could be indolent by rule. To hinder your death, or procure you a dinner, I mean if really in want of one; his earnestness, his exertions could not be prevented, though health and purse and ease were all destroyed by their violence. If you wanted a slight favour, you must apply to people of other dispositions; for not a step would Johnson move to obtain a man a vote in a society, to repay a compliment which might be useful or pleasing, to write a letter of request, or to obtain a hundred pounds a year more for a friend, who perhaps had already two or three. No force could urge him to diligence, no importunity could conquer his resolution of standing still. "What good are we doing with all this ado (would he say)? dearest Lady, let's hear no more of it!" I have however more

[1] See Boswell on this passage, vol. iii., p. 423.

than once in my life forced him on such services, but with extreme difficulty.

We parted at his door one evening when I had teized him for many weeks to write a recommendatory letter of a little boy to his schoolmaster; and after he had faithfully promised to do this prodigious feat before we met again—Do not forget dear Dick, Sir, said I, as he went out of the coach: he turned back, stood still two minutes on the carriage-step—"When I have written my letter for Dick, I may hang myself, mayn't I?"—and turned away in a very ill humour indeed.

Though apt enough to take sudden likings or aversions to people he occasionally met, he would never hastily pronounce upon their character; and when seeing him justly delighted with Solander's conversation, I observed once that he was a man of great parts who talked from a full mind—"It may be so (said Mr. Johnson), but you cannot know it yet, nor I neither: the pump works well, to be sure! but how, I wonder, are we to decide in so very short an acquaintance, whether it is supplied by a spring or a reservoir?"—He always made a great difference in his esteem between talents and erudition; and when he saw a person eminent for literature, though wholly unconversible, it fretted him. "Teaching such tonies (said he to me one day) is like setting a lady's diamonds in lead, which only obscures the lustre of the stone, and makes the possessor ashamed on't." Useful and what we call every-day knowledge had the most of his just praise. "Let your boy learn arithmetic, dear Madam," was his advice to the mother of a rich young heir: "he will not then be a prey to every

vicious indolence, and compliance with the nephews and nieces who crowd round an old fellow, and help to tuck him in, till he, contented with the exchange of fame for ease, e'en resolves to let them set the pillows at his back, and gives no further proof of his existence than just to suck the jelly that prolongs it."

For such a life or such a death Dr. Johnson was indeed never intended by Providence: his mind was like a warm climate, which brings every thing to perfection suddenly and vigorously, not like the alembicated productions of artificial fire, which always betray the difficulty of bringing them forth when their size is disproportionate to their flavour. *Je ferais un Roman tout comme un autre, mais ils ne n'est point un Roman*, says a famous French writer; and this was so certainly the opinion of the Author of the "Rambler," that all his conversation precepts tended towards the dispersion of romantic ideas, and were chiefly intended to promote the cultivation of

"That which before thee lies in daily life."
MILTON.

And when he talked of authors, his praise went spontaneously to such passages as are sure in his own phrase to leave something behind them useful on common occasions, or observant of common manners. For example, it was not the two *last*, but the two *first*, volumes of "Clarissa" that he prized; "For give me a sick bed, and a dying lady (said he), and I'll be pathetic myself: but Richardson had picked the kernel of life (he said), while Fielding was contented with the husk."—It was not King Lear cursing his daughters, or deprecating the storm, that I remember his commendations of; but Iago's ingenious malice, and subtle revenge; or prince Hal's gay compliance with the vices of Falstaff, whom he all along despised. Those plays had indeed no rivals in Johnson's favour: "No man but Shakespeare (he said) could have drawn Sir John."

His manner of criticising and commending Addison's prose was the same in conversation as we read it in the printed strictures, and many of the expressions used have been heard to fall from him on common occasions. It was notwithstanding observable enough (or I fancied so), that he did never like, though he always thought fit to praise it; and his praises resembled those of a man who extols the superior elegance of high painted porcelain, while he himself always chuses to eat off *plate*. I told him so one day, and he neither denied it nor appeared displeased.

Of the pathetick in poetry he never liked to speak, and the only

passage I ever heard him applaud as particularly tender in any common book, was Jane Shore's exclamation in the last act,

"Forgive me! *but* forgive me!"

It was not however from the want of a susceptible heart that he hated to cite tender expressions, for he was more strongly and more violently affected by the force of words representing ideas capable of affecting him at all, than any other man in the world I believe; and when he would try to repeat the celebrated *Prosa Ecclesiastica pro Mortuis*, as it is called, beginning *Dies iræ, Dies illa*, he could never pass the stanza ending thus, *Tantus labor non sit cassus*, without bursting into a flood of tears; which sensibility I used to quote against him when he would inveigh against devotional poetry, and protest that all religious verses were cold and feeble, and unworthy the subject, which ought to be treated with higher reverence, he said, than either poets or painters could presume to excite or bestow. Nor can any thing be a stronger proof of Dr. Johnson's piety than such an expression; for his idea of poetry was magnificent indeed, and very fully was he persuaded of its superiority over every other talent bestowed by heaven on man. His chapter upon that particular subject in his "Rasselas," is really written from the fullness of his heart, and quite in his best manner I think. I am not so sure that this is the proper place to mention his writing that surprising little volume in a week or ten days time,[1] in order to obtain money for his journey to Litchfield when his mother lay upon her last sickbed.

Promptitude of thought indeed, and quickness of expression, were

No, upon my word, replied the other, I see no *honour* in it, whatever you may do. "Well, Sir! (returned Mr. Johnson sternly) if you do not *see* the *honour*, I am sure I *feel* the *disgrace*."[1]

A young fellow, less confident of his own abilities, lamenting one day that he had lost all his Greek—"I believe it happened at the same time, Sir (said Johnson), that I lost all my large estate in Yorkshire."

But however roughly he might be suddenly provoked to treat a harmless exertion of vanity, he did not wish to inflict the pain he gave, and was sometimes very sorry when he perceived the people to smart more than they deserved. How harshly you treated that man to-day, said I once, who harangued us so about gardening—"I am sorry (said he) if I vexed the creature, for there certainly is no harm in a fellow's rattling a rattle-box, only don't let him think that he thunders."—The Lincolnshire lady who shewed him a grotto she had been making, came off no better as I remember: Would it not be a pretty cool habitation in summer? said she, Mr. Johnson! "I think it would, Madam (replied he),—for a toad."

All desire of distinction indeed had a sure enemy in Mr. Johnson. We met a friend driving six very small ponies, and stopt to admire them. "Why does nobody (said our doctor) begin the fashion of driving six spavined horses, all spavined of the same leg? it would have a mighty pretty effect, and produce the distinction of doing something worse than the common way."

When Mr. Johnson had a mind to compliment any one, he did it with more dignity to himself, and better effect upon the company, than any man. I can recollect but few instances indeed, though perhaps that may be more my fault than his. When Sir Joshua Reynolds left the room one day, he said, "There goes a man not to be spoiled by prosperity." And when Mrs. Montague shewed him some China plates which had once belonged to Queen Elizabeth, he told her, "that they had no reason to be ashamed of their present possessor, who was so little inferior to the first." I likewise remember that he pronounced one day at my house a most lofty panegyric upon Jones the Orientalist, who seemed little pleased with the praise, for what cause I know not. He was not at all offended, when comparing all our acquaintance to some animal or other, we pitched upon the elephant for his resemblance, adding that the proboscis of that creature was like his mind most exactly, strong to buffet even the tyger, and pliable to pick up even the pin. The truth is, Mr. Johnson was often good-humouredly willing to join in childish amusements, and

[1] See Boswell's remarks on this story, see Life, vol. iii., p. 422.

hated to be left out of any innocent merriment that was going forward. Mr. Murphy always said, he was incomparable at buffoonery; and I verily think, if he had had good eyes, and a form less inflexible, he would have made an admirable mimic.

He certainly rode on Mr. Thrale's old hunter with a good firmness, and though he would follow the hounds fifty miles an end sometimes, would never own himself either tired or amused. "I have now learned (said he), by hunting, to perceive, that it is no diversion at all, nor ever takes a man out of himself for a moment: the dogs have less sagacity than I could have prevailed on myself to suppose; and the gentlemen often call to me not to ride over them. It is very strange, and very melancholy, that the paucity of human pleasures should persuade us ever to call hunting one of them."—He was however proud to be amongst the sportsmen; and I think no praise ever went so close to his heart, as when Mr. Hamilton called out one day upon Brighthelmstone Downs, Why Johnson rides as well, for ought I see, as the most illiterate fellow in England.

Though Dr. Johnson owed his very life to air and exercise, given him when his organs of respiration could scarcely play, in the year 1766, yet he ever persisted in the notion, that neither of them had any thing to do with health. "People live as long (said he) in Pepper-alley as on Salisbury-plain; and they live so much happier, that an inhabitant of the first would, if he turned cottager, starve his understanding for want of conversation, and perish in a state of mental inferiority."

repeated it. He had indeed no necessity to lead t[illegible] m of to a favourite channel, that his fulness on the [illegible] night shewn more clearly, whatever was the topic; and h[illegible] y le[illegible] choice to others. His information best enlighten[illegible] strengthened, and his wit made it ever remembered. [illegible] have been said, as he often delighted to say of Edm[illegible] you could not stand five minutes with that man ben[illegible] it rained, but you must be convinced you had been [illegible] greatest man you had ever [illegible] seen.

As we had been saying o[illegible] no subject [illegible] l of r[illegible] dignity from the manner in [illegible] Johnson trea[illegible] it, [illegible] my house said, she would n[illegible] talk about love; and [illegible] ner measures accordingly, derid[illegible] novels of the day bec[illegible] ney treated about love. "It is [illegible] ied our philosopher) be[illegible] y treat, as you call it, about lo[illegible] because they treat of n[illegible] nat they are despicable: we mu[illegible] t ridicule a passion which [illegible] who never felt never was happy, [illegible] he who laughs at never deserves to feel—a passion which has caused the change of empires, and the loss of worlds—a passion which has inspired heroism and subdued avarice." He thought he had already said too much. "A passion, in short (added he, with an altered tone), that consumes me away for my pretty Fanny here, and she is very cruel (speaking of another lady in the room)." He told us however in the course of the same chat, how his negro Francis had been eminent for his success among the girls. Seeing us all laugh, "I must have you know, ladies (said he), that Frank has carried the empire of Cupid further than most men. When I was in Lincolnshire so many years ago, he attended me thither; and when we returned home together, I found that a female haymaker had followed him to London for love." Francis was indeed no small favourite with his master, who retained however a prodigious influence over his most violent passions.

On the birth-day of our eldest daughter, and that of our friend Dr. Johnson, the 17th and 18th of September, we every year made up a little dance and supper, to divert our servants and their friends, putting the summer-house into their hands for the two evenings, to fill with acquaintance and merriment. Francis and his white wife were invited of course. She was eminently pretty, and he was jealous, as my maids told me. On the first of these days amusements (I know not what year) Frank took offence at some attentions paid his Desdemona, and walked away next morning to London in wrath. His master and I driving the same road an hour after, overtook him.

"What is the matter, child (says Dr. Johnson), that you leave Streatham to-day? *dirt milk?*" He is jealous (whispered I). "Are you jealous of your wife, you stupid blockhead (cries out his master in another tone)?" The fellow hesitated; and, *To be sure Sir*, I *don't quite approve Sir*, was the stammering reply. "Why, what do they *do* to her, man? do the footmen kiss her?" No Sir, no!—Kiss my *wife Sir!—I hope not Sir.* "Why, what *do* they do to her, my lad?" Why nothing Sir, I'm sure Sir. "Why then go back directly and dance you dog, do; and let's hear no more of such empty lamentations." I believe however that Francis was scarcely as much the object of Mr. Johnson's personal kindness, as the representative of Dr. Bathurst, for whose sake he would have loved any body, or any thing.

When he spoke of negroes, he always appeared to think them of a race naturally inferior, and made few exceptions in favour of his own; yet whenever disputes arose in his household among the many odd inhabitants of which it consisted, he always sided with Francis against the others, whom he suspected (not unjustly I believe) of greater malignity. It seems at once vexatious and comical to reflect, that the dissensions those people chose to live constantly in, distressed and mortified him exceedingly. He really was oftentimes afraid of going home, because he was so sure to be met at the door with numberless complaints; and he used to lament pathetically to me, and to Mr. Sastres the Italian master, who was much his favourite, that they made his life miserable from the impossibility he

sight little calculated for his society. A rough fellow one day on such an occasion, a hatter by trade, seeing Mr. Johnson's beaver in a state of decay, seized it suddenly with one hand, and clapping him on the back with the other; Ah, Master Johnson (says he), this is no time to be thinking about *hats*. "No, no, Sir (replies our Doctor in a cheerful tone), hats are of no use now, as you say, except to throw up in the air and huzza with;" accompanying his words with the true election halloo.

But it was never against people of coarse life that his contempt was expressed, while poverty of sentiment in men who considered themselves to be company for *the parlour*, as he called it, was what he would not bear. A very ignorant young fellow, who had plagued us all for nine or ten months, died at last consumptive: "I think (said Mr. Johnson when he heard the news), I am afraid, I should have been more concerned for the death of the *dog;* but —— (hesitating a while) I am not wrong now in all this, for the dog acted up to his character on every occasion that we know; but that dunce of a fellow helped forward the general disgrace of humanity." Why dear Sir (said I), how odd you are! you have often said the lad was not capable of receiving further instruction. "He was (replied the Doctor) like a corked bottle, with a drop of dirty water in it, to be sure; one might pump upon it for ever without the smallest effect; but when every method to open and clean it had been tried, you would not have me grieve that the bottle was broke at last."

This was the same youth who told us he had been reading Lucius Florus; *Florus Delphini* was the phrase; and my mother (said he) thought it had something to do with Delphos; but of that I know nothing. Who founded Rome then (enquired Mr. Thrale)? The lad replied, Romulus. And who succeeded Romulus (said I)? A long pause, and apparently distressful hesitation, followed the difficult question. "Why will you ask him in terms that he does not comprehend (said Mr. Johnson enraged)? You might as well bid him tell you who phlebotomised Romulus. This fellow's dulness is elastic (continued he), and all we do is but like kicking at a woolsack."

The pains he took however to obtain the young man more patient instructors, were many, and oftentimes repeated. He was put under the care of a clergyman in a distant province; and Mr. Johnson used both to write and talk to his friend concerning his education. It was on that occasion that I remember his saying, "A boy should never be sent to Eton or Westminster school before

he is twelve years old at least; for if in his years of babyhood he 'scapes that general and transcendent knowledge without which life is perpetually put to a stand, he will never get it at a public school, where if he does not learn Latin and Greek, he learns nothing." Mr. Johnson often said, "that there was too much stress laid upon literature as indispensably necessary: there is surely no need that every body should be a scholar, no call that every one should square the circle. Our manner of teaching (said he) cramps and warps many a mind, which if left more at liberty would have been respectable in some way, though perhaps not in that. We lop our trees, and prune them, and pinch them about (he would say), and nail them tight up to the wall, while a good standard is at last the only thing for bearing healthy fruit, though it commonly begins later. Let the people learn necessary knowledge; let them learn to count their fingers, and to count their money, before they are caring for the classics; for (says Mr. Johnson) though I do not quite agree with the proverb, that *Nullum numen abest si sit prudentia*, yet we may very well say, that *Nullum numen adest—ni sit prudentia.*"

We had been visiting at a lady's house, whom as we returned some of the company ridiculed for her ignorance: "She is not ignorant (said he), I believe, of any thing she has been taught, or of any thing she is desirous to know; and I suppose if one wanted a little *run tea*, she might be a proper person enough to apply to."

When I relate these various instances of contemptuous behaviour shewn to a variety of people, I am aware that those who till now have heard little of Mr. Johnson will here cry out against his pride and his

to preach it; tender of the unhappy, and affectionate to the poor, let no one hastily condemn as proud, a character which may perhaps somewhat justly be censured as arrogant. It must however be remembered again, that even this arrogance was never shewn without some intention, immediate or remote, of mending some fault or conveying some instruction. Had I meant to make a panegyric on Mr. Johnson's well-known excellencies, I should have told his deeds only, not his words—sincerely protesting, that as I never saw him once do a wrong thing, so we had accustomed ourselves to look upon him almost as an excepted being; and I should as much have expected injustice from Socrates or impiety from Paschal, as the slightest deviation from truth and goodness in any transaction one might be engaged in with Samuel Johnson. His attention to veracity was without equal or example: and when I mentioned Clarissa as a perfect character; "On the contrary (said he), you may observe there is always something which she prefers to truth.[1] Fielding's Amelia was the most pleasing heroine of all the romances (he said); but that vile broken nose never cured, ruined the sale of perhaps the only book, which being printed off betimes one morning, a new edition was called for before night."

Mr. Johnson's knowledge of literary history was extensive and surprising: he knew every adventure of every book you could name almost, and was exceedingly pleased with the opportunity which writing the Poets Lives gave him to display it. He loved to be set at work, and was sorry when he came to the end of the business he was about. I do not feel so myself with regard to these sheets: a fever which has preyed on me while I wrote them over for the press, will perhaps lessen my power of doing well the first, and probably the last work I should ever have thought of presenting to the Public. I could doubtless wish so to conclude it, as at least to shew my zeal for my friend, whose life, as I once had the honour and happiness of being useful to, I should wish to record a few particular traits of, that those who read should emulate his goodness; but seeing the necessity of making even virtue and learning such as *his* agreeable, that all should be warned against such coarseness of manners, as drove even from *him* those who loved, honoured, and esteemed him. His wife's daughter, Mrs. Lucy Porter of Litchfield, whose veneration for his person and character has ever been the greatest possible, being opposed one day in conversation by a clergyman who came often to her house, and feeling somewhat offended, cried out suddenly, Why, Mr. Pearson, said she, you are just like Dr. Johnson, I think: I do

[1] See Life, vol. ii., p. 324.

not mean that you are a man of the greatest capacity in all the world like Dr. Johnson, but that you contradict one every word one speaks, just like him.

Mr. Johnson told me the story: he was present at the giving of the reproof. It was however observable that with all his odd severity, he could not keep even indifferent people from teizing him with unaccountable confessions of silly conduct which one would think they would scarcely have had inclination to reveal even to their tenderest and most intimate companions; and it was from these unaccountable volunteers in sincerity that he learned to warn the world against follies little known, and seldom thought on by other moralists.

Much of his eloquence, and much of his logic have I heard him use to prevent men from making vows on trivial occasions;[1] and when he saw a person oddly perplexed about a slight difficulty, "Let the man alone (he would say), and torment him no more about it; there is a vow in the case, I am convinced; but is it not very strange that people should be neither afraid nor ashamed of bringing in God Almighty thus at every turn between themselves and their dinner?" When I asked what ground he had for such imaginations, he informed me, "That a young lady once told him in confidence, that she could never persuade herself to be dressed against the bell rung for dinner, till she had made a vow to heaven that she would never more be absent from the family meals."

The strangest applications in the world were certainly made from time to time towards Mr. Johnson, who by that means had an inex-

any for himself.—But probably (said I), your master was wholly indifferent with regard to such trivial emoluments; you had better ask for it at once, and so take your trifles with consent.—Oh, Sir! replies the visitor, my master bid me have as much as I pleased, and was half angry when I talked to him about it.—Then pray Sir (said I), teize me no more about such airy nothings;—and was going on to be very angry, when I recollected that the fellow might be mad perhaps; so I asked him, When he left the counting-house of an evening?—At seven o'clock, Sir.—And when do you go to bed, Sir?—At twelve o'clock.—Then (replied I) I have at least learned thus much by my new acquaintance;—that five hours of the four-and-twenty unemployed are enough for a man to go mad in; so I would advise you Sir, to study algebra, if you are not an adept already in it: your head would get less *muddy*, and you will leave off tormenting your neighbours about paper and packthread, while we all live together in a world that is bursting with sin and sorrow.—It is perhaps needless to add, that this visitor came no more."

Mr. Johnson had indeed a real abhorrence of a person that had ever before him treated a little thing like a great one: and he quoted this scrupulous gentleman with his packthread very often, in ridicule of a friend who, looking out on Streatham Common from our windows one day, lamented the enormous wickedness of the times, because some bird-catchers were busy there one fine Sunday morning. "While half the Christian world is permitted (said he) to dance and sing, and celebrate Sunday as a day of festivity, how comes your puritanical spirit so offended with frivolous and empty deviations from exactness. Whoever loads life with unnecessary scruples, Sir (continued he), provokes the attention of others on his conduct, and incurs the censure of singularity without reaping the reward of superior virtue."

I must not, among the anecdotes of Dr. Johnson's life, omit to relate a thing that happened to him one day, which he told me of himself. As he was walking along the Strand a gentleman stepped out of some neighbouring tavern, with his napkin in his hand and no hat, and stopping him as civilly as he could—I beg your pardon, Sir; but you are Dr. Johnson, I believe. "Yes, Sir." We have a wager depending on your reply: Pray, Sir, is it irrèparable or irrepàirable that one should say? "The *last* I think, Sir (answered Dr. Johnson), for the adverb ought to follow the verb; but you had better consult my Dictionary than me, for that was the result of more thought than you will now give me time for." No, no, replied the gentleman gaily, the book I have no certainty at all of; but here is the *author*, to whom

I referred: Is he not, Sir? to a friend with him: I have won my twenty guineas quite fairly, and am much obliged to you, Sir; so shaking Mr. Johnson kindly by the hand, he went back to finish his dinner or desert.

Another strange thing he told me once which there was no danger of forgetting: how a young gentleman called on him one morning, and told him that his father having, just before his death, dropped suddenly into the enjoyment of an ample fortune, he, the son, was willing to qualify himself for genteel society by adding some literature to his other endowments, and wished to be put in an easy way of obtaining it. Johnson recommended the university; "for you read Latin, Sir, with *facility*." I read it a little to be sure, Sir. "But do you read it *with facility*, I say?" Upon my word, Sir, I do not very well know, but I rather believe not. Mr. Johnson now began to recommend other branches of science, when he found languages at such an immeasurable distance, and advising him to study natural history, there arose some talk about animals, and their divisions into oviparous and viviparous; And the cat here, Sir, said the youth who wished for instruction, pray in which class is she? Our Doctor's patience and desire of doing good began now to give way to the natural roughness of his temper. "You would do well (said he) to look for some person to be always about you, Sir, who is capable of explaining such matters, and not come to us (there were some literary friends present as I recollect) to know whether the cat lays eggs or not: get a discreet man to keep you company, there are so many who

Of the truth of stories which ran currently about the town concerning Dr. Johnson, it was impossible to be certain, unless one asked himself; and what he told, or suffered to be told before his face without contradicting, has every possible mark I think of real and genuine authenticity. I made one day very minute enquiries about the tale of his knocking down the famous Tom Osborne with his own Dictionary in the man's own house.[1] And how was that affair, in earnest? do tell me, Mr. Johnson? "There is nothing to tell, dearest lady, but that he was insolent and I beat him, and that he was a blockhead and told of it, which I should never have done; so the blows have been multiplying, and the wonder thickening for all these years, as Thomas was never a favourite with the Public. I have beat many a fellow, but the rest had the wit to hold their tongues."

I have heard Mr. Murphy relate a very singular story, while he was present, greatly to the credit of his uncommon skill and knowledge of life and manners: When first the Ramblers came out in separate numbers, as they were the objects of attention to multitudes of people, they happened, as it seems, particularly to attract the notice of a society who met every Saturday evening during the summer at Rumford in Essex, and were known by the name of The Bowling-green Club. These men seeing one day the character of Leviculus the fortune-hunter, or Tetrica the old maid: another day some account of a person who spent his life in hoping for a legacy, or of him who is always prying into other folks affairs, began sure enough to think they were betrayed; and that some of the coterie sate down to divert himself by giving to the Public the portrait of all the rest. Filled with wrath against the traitor of Rumford, one of them resolved to write to the printer and enquire the author's name; Samuel Johnson, was the reply. No more was necessary; Samuel Johnson was the name of the curate, and soon did each begin to load him with reproaches for turning his friends into ridicule in a manner so cruel and unprovoked. In vain did the guiltless curate protest his innocence; one was sure that Aligu meant Mr. Twigg, and that Cupidus was but another name for neighbour Baggs: till the poor parson, unable to contend any longer, rode to London, and brought them full satisfaction concerning the writer, who from his own knowledge of general manners, quickened by a vigorous and warm imagination, had happily delineated, though unknown to himself, the members of the Bowling-green Club.

Mr. Murphy likewise used to tell before Dr. Johnson, of the first

[1] See Life, vol. i., p. 115.

time *they* met, and the occasion of their meeting, which he related thus: That being in those days engaged in a periodical paper,[1] he found himself at a friend's house out of town; and not being disposed to lose pleasure for the sake of business, wished rather to content his bookseller by sending some unstudied essay to London by the servant, than deny himself the company of his acquaintance, and drive away to his chambers for the purpose of writing something more correct. He therefore took up a French "Journal Literaire" that lay about the room, and translating something he liked from it, sent it away without further examination. Time however discovered that he had translated from the French a Rambler of Johnson's, which had been but a month before taken from the English; and thinking it right to make him his personal excuses, he went next day, and found our friend all covered with soot like a chimney-sweeper, in a little room, with an intolerable heat and strange smell, as if he had been acting Lungs in the "Alchymist," making *æther*. "Come, come (says Dr. Johnson), dear Mur, the story is black enough now; and it was a very happy day for me that brought you first to my house, and a very happy mistake about the Ramblers."

Dr. Johnson was always exceeding fond of chemistry; and we made up a sort of laboratory at Streatham one summer, and diverted ourselves with drawing essences and colouring liquors. But the danger Mr. Thrale found his friend in one day when I was driven to London, and he had got the children and servants round him to see some experiments performed, put an end to all our entertainment;

conversation merely: and what wonder that he should have an avidity for the sole delight he was able to enjoy? No man conversed so well as he on every subject; no man so acutely discerned the reason of every fact, the motive of every action, the end of every design. He was indeed often pained by the ignorance or causeless wonder of those who knew less than himself, though he seldom drove them away with apparent scorn, unless he thought they added presumption to stupidity: and it was impossible not to laugh at the patience he shewed, when a Welch parson of mean abilities, though a good heart, struck with reverence at the sight of Dr. Johnson, whom he had heard of as the greatest man living, could not find any words to answer his inquiries concerning a motto round somebody's arms which adorned a tomb-stone in Ruabon church-yard. If I remember right the words were,

"*Heb Dw, Heb Dym,*
Dw o' diggon."

And though of no very difficult construction, the gentleman seemed wholly confounded, and unable to explain them; till Mr. Johnson having picked out the meaning by little and little, said to the man, "*Heb* is a preposition, I believe Sir, is it not?" My countryman recovering some spirits upon the sudden question, cried out, So I humbly presume Sir, very comically.

Stories of humour do not tell well in books; and what made impression on the friends who heard a jest, will seldom much delight the distant acquaintance or sullen critic who reads it. The cork model of Paris is not more despicable as a resemblance of a great city, than this book, *levior cortice*, as a specimen of Johnson's character. Yet every body naturally likes to gather little specimens of the rarities found in a great country; and could I carry home from Italy square pieces of all the curious marbles which are the just glory of this surprising part of the world, I could scarcely contrive perhaps to arrange them so meanly as not to gain some attention from the respect due to the places they once belonged to.—Such a piece of motley Mosaic work will these Anecdotes inevitably make: but let the reader remember that he was promised nothing better, and so be as contented as he can.

An Irish trader at our house one day heard Johnson launch out into very great and greatly deserved praises of Mr. Edmund Burke: delighted to find his countryman stood so high in the opinion of a man he had been told so much of, Sir (said he), give *me* leave to tell something of Mr. Burke now. We were all silent, and the honest Hibernian began

to relate how Mr. Burke went to see the collieries in a distant province; and he would go down into the bowels of the earth (in a bag), and he would examine every thing: he went in a bag Sir, and ventured his health and his life for knowledge; but he took care of his clothes, that they should not be spoiled, for he went down in a bag. "Well Sir (says Mr. Johnson good-humouredly), if our friend Mund should die in any of these hazardous exploits, you and I would write his life and panegyric together; and your chapter of it should be entitled thus: *Burke in a Bag.*"

He had always a very great personal regard and particular affection for Mr. Edmund Burke, as well as an esteem difficult for me to repeat, though for him only easy to express. And when at the end of the year 1774 the general election called us all different ways, and broke up the delightful society in which we had spent some time at Beaconsfield, Dr. Johnson shook the hospitable master of the house kindly by the hand, and said, "Farewel my dear Sir, and remember that I wish you all the success which ought to be wished you, which can possibly be wished you indeed—*for an honest man.*"

I must here take leave to observe, that in giving little memoirs of Mr. Johnson's behaviour and conversation, such as I saw and heard it, my book lies under manifest disadvantages, compared with theirs, who having seen him in various situations, and observed his conduct in numberless cases, are able to throw stronger and more brilliant lights upon his character. Virtues are like shrubs, which yield their sweets in different manners according to the circumstances which surround them: and while generosity of soul scatters its fragrance like

that is seen unfavourably, and with a paleness beyond what nature gave it.

When I have told how many follies Dr. Johnson knew of others, I must not omit to mention with how much fidelity he would always have kept them concealed, could they of whom he knew the absurdities have been contented, in the common phrase, to keep their own counsel. But returning home one day from dining at the chaplain's table, he told me, that Dr. Goldsmith had given a very comical and unnecessarily exact recital there, of his own feelings when his play was hissed; telling the company how he went indeed to the Literary Club at night, and chatted gaily among his friends, as if nothing had happened amiss; that to impress them still more forcibly with an idea of his magnanimity, he even sung his favourite song about an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon; but all this while I was suffering horrid tortures (said he), and verily believe that if I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that, and so they never perceived my not eating, nor I believe at all imaged to themselves the anguish of my heart: but when all were gone except Johnson here, I burst out a-crying, and even swore by —— that I would never write again. "All which, Doctor (says Mr. Johnson, amazed at his odd frankness), I thought had been a secret between you and me; and I am sure I would not have said any thing about it for the world. Now see (repeated he when he told the story) what a figure a man makes who thus unaccountably chuses to be the frigid narrator of his own disgrace. *Il volto sciolto, ed i pensieri stretti*, was a proverb made on purpose for such mortals, to keep people, if possible, from being thus the heralds of their own shame: for what compassion can they gain by such silly narratives? No man should be expected to sympathise with the sorrows of vanity. If then you are mortified by any ill usage, whether real or supposed, keep at least the account of such mortifications to yourself, and forbear to proclaim how meanly you are thought on by others, unless you desire to be meanly thought of by all."

The little history of another friend's superfluous ingenuity will contribute to introduce a similar remark. He had a daughter of about fourteen years old, as I remember, fat and clumsy: and though the father adored, and desired others to adore her, yet being aware perhaps that she was not what the French call *paitrie des graces*, and thinking I suppose that the old maxim, of beginning to laugh at your-

self first where you have anything ridiculous about you, was a good one, he comically enough called his girl *Trundle* when he spoke of her; and many who bore neither of them any ill-will felt disposed to laugh at the happiness of the appellation. "See now (says Dr. Johnson) what haste people are in to be hooted. Nobody ever thought of this fellow nor of his daughter, could he but have been quiet himself, and forborne to call the eyes of the world on his dowdy and her deformity. But it teaches one to see at least, that if nobody else will nickname one's children, the parents will e'en do it themselves."

All this held true in matters to Mr. Johnson of more serious consequence. When Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted his portrait looking into the slit of his pen, and holding it almost close to his eye, as was his general custom, he felt displeased, and told me "he would not be known by posterity for his *defects* only, let Sir Joshua do his worst." I said in reply, that Reynolds had no such difficulties about himself, and that he might observe the picture which hung up in the room where we were talking, represented Sir Joshua holding his ear in his hand to catch the sound. "He may paint himself as deaf if he chuses (replied Johnson); but I will not be *blinking Sam.*"

It is chiefly for the sake of evincing the regularity and steadiness of Mr. Johnson's mind that I have given these trifling memoirs, to shew that his soul was not different from that of another person, but, as it was, greater; and to give those who did not know him a just idea of his acquiescence in what we call vulgar prejudices, and of his extreme distance from those notions which the world has agreed, I know not very well why, to call romantic. It is indeed observable in his preface

other dangers of elegance and personal charms, which have been always acknowledged as a positive good, and for the want of which there should be always given some weighty compensation. I have however (continued Mr. Johnson) seen some prudent fellows who forbore to connect themselves with beauty lest coquetry should be near, and with wit or birth lest insolence should lurk behind them, till they have been forced by their discretion to linger life away in tasteless stupidity, and chuse to count the moments by remembrance of pain instead of enjoyment of pleasure."

When professions were talked of, "Scorn (said Mr. Johnson) to put your behaviour under the dominion of canters; never think it clever to call physic a mean study, or law a dry one; or ask a baby of seven years old which way *his genius* leads him, when we all know that a boy of seven years old has no *genius* for any thing except a peg-top and an apple-pye; but fix on some business where much money may be got and little virtue risqued: follow that business steadily, and do not live as Roger Ascham[1] says the wits do, *Men know not how; and at last die obscurely, men mark not when.*"

Dr. Johnson had indeed a veneration for the voice of mankind beyond what most people will own; and as he liberally confessed that all his own disappointments proceeded from himself, he hated to hear others complain of general injustice. I remember when lamentation was made of the neglect shewed to Jeremiah Markland, a great philologist as some one ventured to call him—"He is a scholar undoubtedly Sir (replied Dr. Johnson), but remember that he would run from the world, and that it is not the world's business to run after him. I hate a fellow whom pride, or cowardice, or laziness drives into a corner, and does nothing when he is there but sit and *growl*; let him come out as I do, and *bark*. The world (added he) is chiefly unjust and ungenerous in this, that all are ready to encourage a man who once talks of leaving it, and few things do really provoke me more, than to hear people prate of retirement, when they have neither skill to discern their own motives, or penetration to estimate the consequences: but while a fellow is active to gain either power or wealth (continued he), every body produces some hindrance to his advancement, some sage remark, or some unfavourable prediction; but let him once say slightly, I have had enough of this troublesome bustling world, 'tis time to leave it now: Ah, dear Sir! cries the first old acquaintance he meets, I am glad to find you in this happy disposition:

[1] The Scholemaster, Roger. Ascham. 2nd ed. London, 1743, p. 14.

yes, dear friend! *do* retire and think of nothing but your own ease: there's Mr. William will find it a pleasure to settle all your accounts and relieve you from the fatigue; Miss Dolly makes the charmingest chicken broth in the world, and the cheesecakes we eat of her's once, how good they were: I will be coming every two or three days myself to chat with you in a quiet way; *so snug!* and tell you how matters go upon 'Change, or in the House, or according to the blockhead's first pursuits, whether lucrative or politic, which thus he leaves; and lays himself down a voluntary prey to his own sensuality and sloth, while the ambition and avarice of the nephews and nieces, with their rascally adherents and coadjutors, reap the advantage, while they fatten their fool."

As the votaries of retirement had little of Mr. Johnson's applause, unless that he knew that the motives were merely devotional, and unless he was convinced that their rituals were accompanied by a mortified state of the body, the sole proof of their sincerity which he would admit, as a compensation for such fatigue as a worldly life of care and activity requires; so of the various states and conditions of humanity, he despised none more I think than the man who marries for a maintenance: and of a friend who made his alliance on no higher principles, he said once, "Now has that fellow (it was a nobleman of whom we were speaking) at length obtained a certainty of three meals a day, and for that certainty, like his brother dog in the fable, he will get his neck galled for life with a collar."

That poverty was an evil to be avoided by all honest means how-

strong passion and wild temerity, for treacherous caution, and desire to circumvent. I am always (said he) on the young people's side, when there is a dispute between them and the old ones; for you have at least a chance for virtue till age has withered its very root." While we were talking, my mother's spaniel whom he never loved, stole our toast and butter; Fye Belle! said I, you used to be upon honour; "Yes Madam (replies Johnson), *but Belle grows old.*" His reason for hating the dog was, "because she was a professed favourite (he said), and because her Lady ordered her from time to time to be washed and combed: a foolish trick (said he) and an assumption of superiority that every one's nature revolts at; so because one must not wish ill to the Lady in such cases (continued he), one curses the cur." The truth is, Belle was not well behaved, and being a large spaniel, was troublesome enough at dinner with frequent solicitations to be fed. "This animal (said Dr. Johnson one day) would have been of extraordinary merit and value in the state of Lycurgus; for she condemns one to the exertion of perpetual vigilance."

He had indeed that strong aversion felt by all the lower ranks of people towards four-footed companions very completely, notwithstanding he had for many years a cat which he called Hodge, that kept always in his room at Fleet-street; but so exact was he not to offend the human species by superfluous attention to brutes, that when the creature was grown sick and old, and could eat nothing but oysters, Mr. Johnson always went out himself to buy Hodge's dinner, that Francis the Black's delicacy might not be hurt, at seeing himself employed for the convenience of a quadruped.

No one was indeed so attentive not to offend in all such sort of things as Dr. Johnson; nor so careful to maintain the ceremonies of life: and though he told Mr. Thrale once, that he had never sought to please till past thirty years old, considering the matter as hopeless, he had been always studious not to make enemies, by apparent preference of himself. It happened very comically, that the moment this curious conversation past, of which I was a silent auditress, was in the coach, in some distant province, either Shropshire or Derbyshire I believe; and as soon as it was over, Mr. Johnson took out of his pocket a little book and read, while a gentleman of no small distinction for his birth and elegance, suddenly rode up to the carriage, and paying us all his proper compliments, was desirous not to neglect Dr. Johnson; but observing that he did not see him, tapt him gently on the shoulder—'Tis Mr. Ch—lm—ley, says my husband;—"Well, Sir! and what if it is Mr. Ch—lm—ley!" says the other sternly, just

lifting his eyes a moment from his book, and returning to it again with renewed avidity.[3]

He had sometimes fits of reading very violent; and when he was in earnest about getting through some particular pages, for I have heard him say he never read but one book, which he did not consider as obligatory, through in his whole life (and Lady Mary Wortley's Letters was the book); he would be quite lost to company, and withdraw all his attention to what he was reading, without the smallest knowledge or care about the noise made round him. His deafness made such conduct less odd and less difficult to him than it would have been to another man; but his advising others to take the same method, and pull a little book out when they were not entertained with what was going forward in society, seemed more likely to advance the growth of science than of polished manners, for which he always pretended extreme veneration.

Mr. Johnson indeed always measured other people's notions of every thing by his own, and nothing could persuade him to believe, that the books which he disliked were agreeable to thousands, or that air and exercise which he despised were beneficial to the health of other mortals. When poor Smart, so well known for his wit and misfortunes, was first obliged to be put in private lodgings, a common friend of both lamented in tender terms the necessity which had torn so pleasing a companion from their acquaintance—"A madman must be confined, Sir," (replies Dr. Johnson;) but, says the other, I am

plied Mr. Johnson) would be useless to a man who knew he was not a liar when he was sober."

When one talks of giving and taking the lie familiarly, it is impossible to forbear recollecting the transactions between the editor of Ossian and the author of the "Journey to the Hebrides." It was most observable to me however, that Mr. Johnson never bore his antagonist the slightest degree of ill-will. He always kept those quarrels which belonged to him as a writer, separate from those which he had to do with as a man; but I never did hear him say in private one malicious word of a public enemy; and of Mr. Macpherson I once heard him speak respectfully, though his reply to the friend who asked him if *any man living* could have written such a book, is well known, and has been often repeated; "Yes, Sir; many men, many women, and many children."

I enquired of him myself if this story was authentic, and he said it was.[1] I made the same enquiry concerning his account of the state of literature in Scotland, which was repeated up and down at one time by every body—"How knowledge was divided among the Scots, like bread in a besieged town, to every man a mouthful, to no man a bellyful." This story he likewise acknowledged, and said besides, "that some officious friend had carried it to Lord Bute, who only answered—Well, well! never mind what he says—he will have the pension all one."

Another famous reply to a Scotsman who commended the beauty and dignity of Glasgow, till Mr. Johnson stopped him by observing, "that he probably had never yet seen Brentford," was one of the jokes he owned: and said himself, "that when a gentleman of that country once mentioned the lovely prospects common in his nation, he could not help telling him, that the view of the London road was the prospect in which every Scotsman most naturally and most rationally delighted."

Mrs. Brooke received an answer not unlike this, when expatiating on the accumulation of sublime and beautiful objects, which form the fine prospect UP the river St. Lawrence in North America; "Come Madam (says Dr. Johnson), confess that nothing ever equalled your pleasure in seeing that sight reversed; and finding yourself looking at the happy prospect DOWN the river St. Lawrence." The truth is, he hated to hear about prospects and views, and laying out ground and taste in gardening: "That was the best garden (he said) which produced most roots and fruits; and that water was most to be prized

[1] Vol. ii., p. 190.

which contained most fish." He used to laugh at Shenstone most unmercifully for not caring whether there was any thing good to eat in the streams he was so fond of, "as if (says Johnson) one could fill one's belly with hearing soft murmurs, or looking at rough cascades!"

He loved the sight of fine forest trees however, and detested Brightelmstone Downs, "because it was a country so truly desolate (he said), that if one had a mind to hang one's self for desperation at being obliged to live there, it would be difficult to find a tree on which to fasten the rope." Walking in a wood when it rained, was, I think, the only rural image he pleased his fancy with; "for (says he) after one has gathered the apples in an orchard, one wishes them well baked, and removed to a London eating-house for enjoyment."

With such notions, who can wonder he passed his time uncomfortably enough with us, who he often complained of for living so much in the country; "feeding the chickens (as he said I did) till I starved my own understanding. Get however (said he) a book about gardening, and study it hard, since you will pass your life with birds and flowers, and learn to raise the *largest* turnips, and to breed the *biggest* fowls." It was vain to assure him that the goodness of such dishes did not depend upon their size; he laughed at the people who covered their canals with foreign fowls, "when (says he) our own geese and ganders are twice as large: if we fetched better animals from distant nations, there might be some sense in the preference; but to get cows from Alderney, or water-fowl from China, only to see nature

on the daily forage that they pick up by running about, and snatching what drops from their neighbours as ignorant as themselves, will never ferment into any knowledge valuable or durable; but like the light wines we drink in hot countries, please for the moment though incapable of keeping. In the study of mankind much will be found to swim as froth, and much must sink as feculence, before the wine can have its effect, and become that noblest liquor which rejoices the heart, and gives vigour to the imagination."

I am well aware that I do not, and cannot give each expression of Dr. Johnson with all its force or all its neatness; but I have done my best to record such of his maxims, and repeat such of his sentiments, as may give to those who knew him not, a just idea of his character and manner of thinking. To endeavour at adorning, or adding, or softening, or meliorating such anecdotes, by any tricks my inexperienced pen could play, would be weakness indeed; worse than the Frenchman who presides over the porcelain manufactory at Seve, to whom when some Greek vases were given him as models, he lamented *la tristesse de telles formes*; and endeavoured to assist them by clusters of flowers, while flying Cupids served for the handles of urns originally intended to contain the ashes of the dead. The misery is, that I can recollect so few anecdotes, and that I have recorded no more axioms of a man whose every word merited attention, and whose every sentiment did honour to human nature. Remote from affectation as from error or falsehood, the comfort a reader has in looking over these papers, is the certainty that those were *really* the opinions of Johnson, which are related as such.

Fear of what others may think, is the great cause of affectation; and he was not likely to disguise his notions out of cowardice. He hated disguise, and nobody penetrated it so readily. I showed him a letter written to a common friend, who was at some loss for the explanation of it: "Whoever wrote it (says our Doctor) could, if he chose it, make himself understood; but 'tis the letter of an *embarrassed man, Sir*;" and so the event proved it to be.

Mysteriousness in trifles offended him on every side: "it commonly ended in guilt (he said); for those who begin by concealment of innocent things, will soon have something to hide which they dare not bring to light." He therefore encouraged an openness of conduct, in women particularly, "who (he observed) were often led away when children, by their delight and power of surprising." He recommended, on something like the same principle, that when one person meant to serve another, he should not go about it slily, or as we say underhand,

out of a false idea of delicacy, to surprise one's friend with an unexpected favour; "which, ten to one (says he), fails to oblige your acquaintance, who had some reasons against such a mode of obligation, which you might have known but for that superfluous cunning which you think an elegance. Oh! never be seduced by such silly pretences (continued he); if a wench wants a good gown, do not give her a fine smelling-bottle, because that is more delicate: as I once knew a lady lend the key of her library to a poor scribbling dependant, as if she took the woman for an ostrich that could digest iron." He said indeed, "that women were very difficult to be taught the proper manner of conferring pecuniary favours; that they always gave too much money or too little; for that they had an idea of delicacy accompanying their gifts, so that they generally rendered them either useless or ridiculous."

He did indeed say very contemptuous things of our sex; but was exceedingly angry when I told Miss Reynolds that he said, "It was well managed of some one to leave his affairs in the hands of his wife, because, in matters of business (said he), no woman stops at integrity." This was, I think the only sentence I ever observed him solicitous to explain away after he had uttered it. He was not at all displeased at the recollection of a sarcasm thrown on a whole profession at once; when a gentleman leaving the company, somebody who sate next Dr. Johnson asked him, who he was? "I cannot exactly tell you Sir (replied he), and I would be loth to speak ill of any person who I do not know deserves it, but I am afraid he is an *attorney*." He did

tations were fewer (he said), their virtue in this life, and happiness in the next, were less improbable; and he loved (he said) to see a knot of little misses dearly."

Needle-work had a strenuous approver in Dr. Johnson,[1] who said, "that one of the great felicities of female life, was the general consent of the world, that they might amuse themselves with petty occupations, which contributed to the lengthening their lives, and preserving their minds in a state of sanity." A man cannot hem a pocket-handkerchief (said a lady of quality to him one day), and so he runs mad, and torments his family and friends. The expression struck him exceedingly, and when one acquaintance grew troublesome, and another unhealthy, he used to quote Lady Frances's observation, "That a man cannot hem a pocket-handkerchief."

The nice people found no mercy from Mr. Johnson; such I mean as can dine only at four o'clock, who cannot bear to be waked at an unusual hour, or miss a stated meal without inconvenience. *He* had no such prejudices himself, and with difficulty forgave them in another. "Delicacy does not surely consist (says he) in impossibility to be pleased, and that is false dignity indeed which is content to depend upon others."

The saying of the old philosopher, who observes, That he who wants least is most like the gods, who want nothing; was a favourite sentence with Dr. Johnson, who on his own part required less attendance, sick or well, than ever I saw any human creature. Conversation was all he required to make him happy; and when he would have tea made at two o'clock in the morning, it was only that there might be a certainty of detaining his companions round him. On that principle it was that he preferred winter to summer, when the heat of the weather gave people an excuse to stroll about, and walk for pleasure in the shade, while he wished to sit still on a chair, and chat day after day, till somebody proposed a drive in the coach; and that was the most delicious moment of his life.[2] "But the carriage must stop sometime (as he said), and the people would come home at last;" so his pleasure was of short duration.

I asked him why he doated on a coach so? and received for answer, "That in the first place, the company was shut in with him *there;* and could not escape, as out of a room: in the next place, he heard all that was said in a carriage, where it was my turn to be deaf:" and very impatient was he at my occasional difficulty of hear-

[1] See vol. iii., p. 3, for reference to Mrs. Knowles' "satile pictures."

[2] See vol. ii., pp. 268, 425.

ing. On this account he wished to travel all over the world; for the very act of going forward was delightful to him, and he gave himself no concern about accidents, which he said never happened: nor did the running-away of the horses on the edge of a precipice between Vernon and St. Denys in France convince him to the contrary; "for nothing came of it (he said), except that Mr. Thrale leaped out of the carriage into a chalkpit, and then came up again, looking *as white!*" When the truth was, all their lives were saved by the greatest providence ever exerted in favour of three human creatures; and the part Mr. Thrale took from desperation was the likeliest thing in the world to produce broken limbs and death.

Fear was indeed a sensation to which Mr. Johnson was an utter stranger, excepting when some sudden apprehensions seized him that he was going to die; and even then he kept all his wits about him, to express the most humble and pathetic petitions to the Almighty: and when the first paralytic stroke took his speech from him, he instantly set about composing a prayer in Latin, at once to deprecate God's mercy, to satisfy himself that his mental powers remained unimpaired, and to keep them in exercise, that they might not perish by permitted stagnation. This was after we parted; but he wrote me an account of it, and I intend to publish that letter, with many more.

When one day he had at my house taken tincture of antimony instead of emetic wine, for a vomit, he was himself the person to direct us what to do for him, and managed with as much coolness and deliberation as if he had been prescribing for an indifferent person. Though on another occasion, when he had lamented in the most piercing terms his approaching dissolution, and conjured me solemnly to tell him what I thought, while Sir Richard Jebb was perpetually on the road to Streatham, and Mr. Johnson seemed to think himself neglected if the physician left him for an hour only, I made him a steady, but as I thought a very gentle harangue, in which I confirmed all that the Doctor had been saying, how no present danger could be expected; but that his age and continued ill health must naturally accelerate the arrival of that hour which can be escaped by none. "And this (says Johnson, rising in great anger) is the voice of female friendship I suppose, when the hand of the hangman would be softer."

Another day, when he was ill, and exceedingly low-spirited, and persuaded that death was not far distant, I appeared before him in a dark-coloured gown, which his bad sight, and worse apprehensions, made him mistake for an iron-grey. "Why do you delight (said he)

ing. On this account he wished to travel all over the world; for the very act of going forward was delightful to him, and he gave himself no concern about accidents, which he said never happened: nor did the running-away of the horses on the edge of a precipice between Vernon and St. Denys in France convince him to the contrary; "for nothing came of it (he said), except that Mr. Thrale leaped out of the carriage into a chalkpit, and then came up again, looking *as white!*" When the truth was, all their lives were saved by the greatest providence ever exerted in favour of three human creatures; and the part Mr. Thrale took from desperation was the likeliest thing in the world to produce broken limbs and death.

Fear was indeed a sensation to which Mr. Johnson was an utter stranger, excepting when some sudden apprehensions seized him that he was going to die; and even then he kept all his wits about him, to express the most humble and pathetic petitions to the Almighty: and when the first paralytic stroke took his speech from him, he instantly set about composing a prayer in Latin, at once to deprecate God's mercy, to satisfy himself that his mental powers remained unimpaired, and to keep them in exercise, that they might not perish by permitted stagnation. This was after we parted; but he wrote me an account of it, and I intend to publish that letter, with many more.

When one day he had at my house taken tincture of antimony instead of emetic wine, for a vomit, he was himself the person to direct us what to do for him, and managed with as much coolness and deliberation as if he had been prescribing for an indifferent per-

tations were fewer (he said), their virtue in this life, and happiness in the next, were less improbable; and he loved (he said) to see a knot of little misses dearly."

Needle-work had a strenuous approver in Dr. Johnson,[1] who said, "that one of the great felicities of female life, was the general consent of the world, that they might amuse themselves with petty occupations, which contributed to the lengthening their lives, and preserving their minds in a state of sanity." A man cannot hem a pocket-handkerchief (said a lady of quality to him one day), and so he runs mad, and torments his family and friends. The expression struck him exceedingly, and when one acquaintance grew troublesome, and another unhealthy, he used to quote Lady Frances's observation, "That a man cannot hem a pocket-handkerchief."

The nice people found no mercy from Mr. Johnson; such I mean as can dine only at four o'clock, who cannot bear to be waked at an unusual hour, or miss a stated meal without inconvenience. *He* had no such prejudices himself, and with difficulty forgave them in another. "Delicacy does not surely consist (says he) in impossibility to be pleased, and that is false dignity indeed which is content to depend upon others."

The saying of the old philosopher, who observes, That he who wants least is most like the gods, who want nothing; was a favourite sentence with Dr. Johnson, who on his own part required less attendance, sick or well, than ever I saw any human creature. Conversation was all he required to make him happy; and when he would have tea made at two o'clock in the morning, it was only that there might be a certainty of detaining his companions round him. On that principle it was that he preferred winter to summer, when the heat of the weather gave people an excuse to stroll about, and walk for pleasure in the shade, while he wished to sit still on a chair, and chat day after day, till somebody proposed a drive in the coach; and that was the most delicious moment of his life.[2] "But the carriage must stop sometime (as he said), and the people would come home at last;" so his pleasure was of short duration.

I asked him why he doated on a coach so? and received for answer, "That in the first place, the company was shut in with him *there;* and could not escape, as out of a room: in the next place, he heard all that was said in a carriage, where it was my turn to be deaf:" and very impatient was he at my occasional difficulty of hear-

[1] See vol. iii., p. 3, for reference to Mrs. Knowles' "sutile pictures."
[2] See vol. ii., pp. 268, 425.

Veronese; while engravers and translators *live* by the Hero of La Mancha in every nation, and the sides of miserable inns all over England and France, and I have heard Germany too, are adorned with the exploits of Don Quixote. May his celebrity procure my pardon for a digression in praise of a writer who, through four volumes of the most exquisite pleasantry and genuine humour, has never been seduced to overstep the limits of propriety, has never called in the wretched auxiliaries of obscenity or profaneness; who trusts to nature and sentiment alone, and never misses of that applause which Voltaire and Sterne labour to produce, while honest merriment bestows her unfading crown upon Cervantes.

Dr. Johnson was a great reader of French literature, and delighted exceedingly in Boileau's works. Moliere I think he had hardly sufficient taste of; and he used to condemn me for preferring La Bruyere to the Duc de Rochefoucault, "who (he said) was the only *gentleman* writer who wrote like a professed author." The asperity of his harsh sentences, each of them a sentence of condemnation, used to disgust me however; though it must be owned that, among the necessaries of human life, a *rasp* is reckoned one as well as a *razor*.

Mr. Johnson did not like any one who said they were happy, or who said any one else was so. "It is all *cant* (he would cry), the dog knows he is miserable all the time." A friend whom he loved exceedingly, told him on some occasion notwithstanding, that his wife's sister was *really* happy, and called upon the lady to confirm his assertion, which she did somewhat roundly as we say and with an

on a visit to Capt. Knight, disgusted him terribly. He asked an officer what some place was called, and received for answer, that it was where the loplolly man kept his loplolly: a reply he considered, not unjustly, as disrespectful, gross, and ignorant; for though in the course of these Memoirs I have been led to mention Dr. Johnson's tenderness towards *poor* people, I do not wish to mislead my readers, and make them think he had any delight in *mean* manners or coarse expressions. Even dress itself, when it resembled that of the vulgar, offended him exceedingly; and when he had condemned me many times for not adorning my children with more show than I thought useful or elegant, I presented a little girl to him who came o'visiting one evening covered with shining ornaments, to see if he would approve of the appearance she made. When they were gone home, Well Sir, said I, how did you like little miss? I hope she was *fine* enough. "It was the finery of a beggar (said he), and you know it was; she looked like a native of Cow Lane dressed up to be carried to Bartholomew fair."

His reprimand to another lady for crossing her little child's handkerchief before, and by that operation dragging down its head oddly and unintentionally, was on the same principle. "It is the beggar's fear of cold (said he) that prevails over such parents, and so they pull the poor thing's head down, and give it the look of a baby that plays about Westminster Bridge, while the mother sits shivering in a *niche*."

I commended a young lady for her beauty and pretty behaviour one day however, to whom I thought no objections could have been made. "I saw her (says Dr. Johnson) take a pair of scissars in her left hand though; and for all her father is now become a nobleman, and as you say excessively rich, I should, were I a youth of quality ten years hence, hesitate between a girl so neglected, and a *negro*."

It was indeed astonishing how he *could* remark such minutenesses with a sight so miserably imperfect; but no accidental position of a ribband escaped him, so nice was his observation, and so rigorous his demands of propriety. When I went with him to Litchfield and came down stairs to breakfast at the inn, my dress did not please him, and he made me alter it entirely before he would stir a step with us about the town, saying most satirical things concerning the appearance I made in a riding-habit; and adding, "'Tis very strange that such eyes as yours cannot discern propriety of dress: if I had a sight only half as good, I think I should see to the centre."

My compliances however were of little worth; what really surprised

me was the victory he gained over a lady little accustomed to contradiction, who had dressed herself for church at Streatham one Sunday morning, in a manner he did not approve, and to whom he said such sharp and pungent things concerning her hat, her gown, &c. that she hastened to change them, and returning quite another figure received his applause, and thanked him for his reproofs, much to the amazement of her husband, who could scarcely believe his own ears.

Another lady, whose accomplishments he never denied, came to our house one day covered with diamonds, feathers, &c. and he did not seem inclined to chat with her as usual. I asked him why? when the company was gone. "Why, her head looked so like that of a woman who shews puppets (said he), and her voice so confirmed the fancy, that I could not bear her to-day; when she wears a large cap, I can talk to her."

When the ladies wore lace trimmings to their clothes, he expressed his contempt of the reigning fashion in these terms: "A Brussels trimming is like bread sauce (said he), it takes away the glow of colour from the gown, and gives you nothing instead of it; but sauce was invented to heighten the flavour of our food, and trimming is an ornament to the manteau, or it is nothing. Learn (said he) that there is propriety or impropriety in every thing how slight soever, and get at the general principles of dress and of behaviour; if you then transgress them, you will at least know that they are not observed."

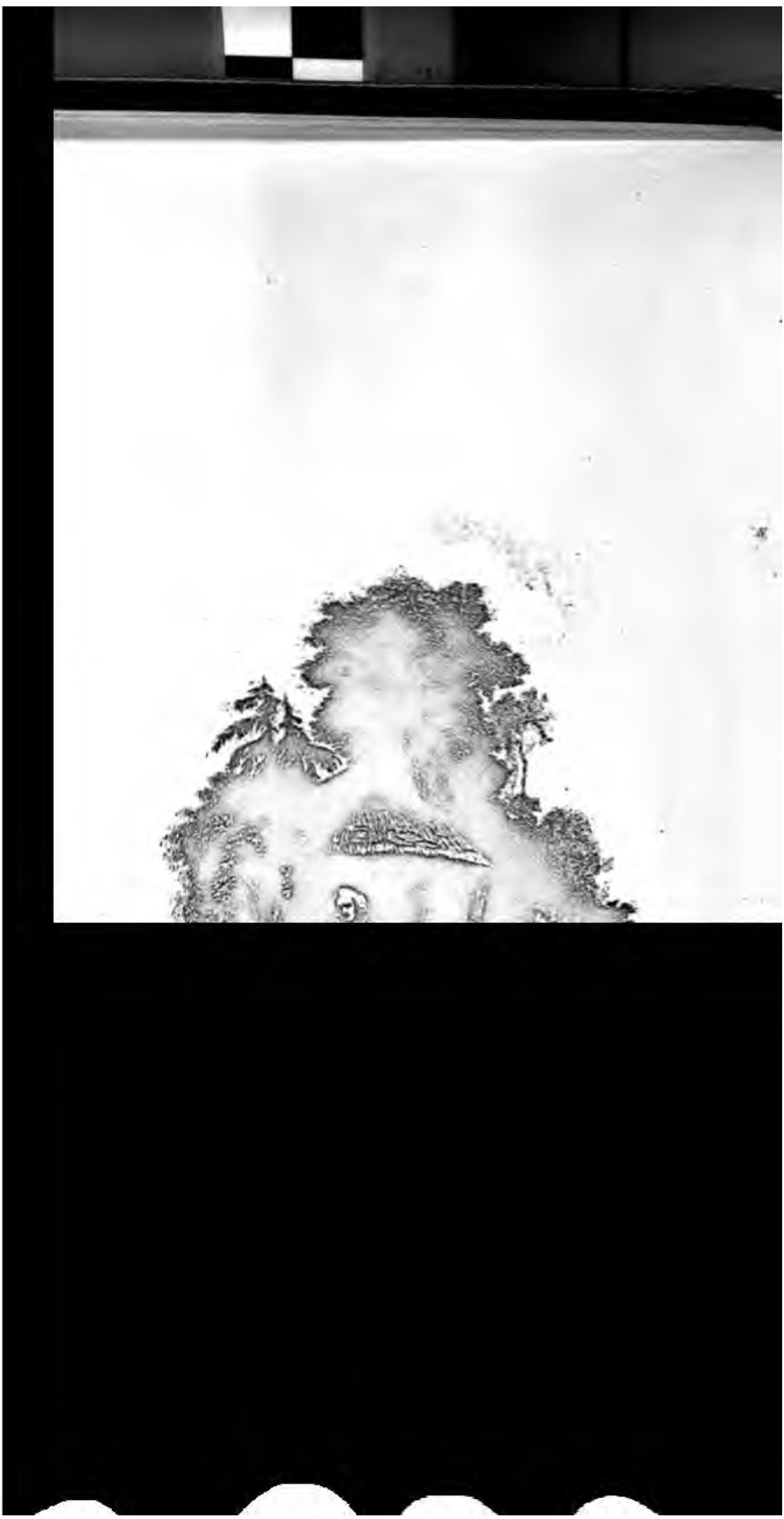
All these exactnesses in a man who was nothing less than exact himself, made him extremely impracticable as an inmate, though most instructive as a companion, and useful as a friend. Mr. Thrale too

"Soh! you've displac'd the mirth, broke the good meeting
With most admir'd disorder."

Such accidents however occurred too often, and I was forced to take advantage of my lost lawsuit, and plead inability of purse to remain longer in London or its vicinage. I had been crossed in my intentions of going abroad, and found it convenient, for every reason of health, peace, and pecuniary circumstances, to retire to Bath, where I knew Mr. Johnson would not follow me, and where I could for that reason command some little portion of time for my own use; a thing impossible while I remained at Streatham or at London, as my hours, carriage, and servants had long been at his command, who would not rise in the morning till twelve o'clock perhaps, and oblige me to make breakfast for him till the bell rung for dinner, though much displeased if the toilet was neglected, and though much of the time we passed together was spent in blaming or deriding, very justly, my neglect of œconomy, and waste of that money which might make many families happy. The original reason of our connection, his *particularly disordered health and spirits*, had been long at an end, and he had no other ailments than old age and general infirmity, which every professor of medicine was ardently zealous and generally attentive to palliate, and to contribute all in their power for the prolongation of a life so valuable. Veneration for his virtue, reverence for his talents, delight in his conversation, and habitual endurance of a yoke my husband first put upon me, and of which he contentedly bore his share for sixteen or seventeen years, made me go on so long with Mr. Johnson; but the perpetual confinement I will own to have been terrifying in the first years of our friendship, and irksome in the last; nor could I pretend to support it without help, when my coadjutor was no more. To the assistance we gave him, the shelter our house afforded to his uneasy fancies, and to the pains we took to sooth or repress them, the world perhaps is indebted for the three political pamphlets, the new edition and correction of his "Dictionary," and for the Poets Lives, which he would scarce have lived, I think, and kept his faculties entire, to have written, had not incessant care been exerted at the time of his first coming to be our constant guest in the country; and several times after that, when he found himself particularly oppressed with diseases incident to the most vivid and fervent imaginations. I shall for ever consider it as the greatest honour which could be conferred on any one, to have been the confidential friend of Dr. Johnson's health; and to have in some measure, with Mr. Thrale's assistance, saved from distress at least, if not from









worse, a mind great beyond the comprehension of common mortals, and good beyond all hope of imitation from perishable beings.

Many of our friends were earnest that he should write the lives of our famous prose authors; but he never made any answer that I can recollect to the proposal, excepting when Sir Richard Musgrave once was singularly warm about it, getting up and intreating him to set about the work immediately; he coldly replied, "*Sit down, Sir!*"

When Mr. Thrale built the new library at Streatham, and hung up over the books the portraits of his favourite friends, that of Dr. Johnson was last finished, and closed the number. It was almost impossible *not* to make verses on such an accidental combination of circumstances, so I made the following ones: but as a character written in verse will for the most part be found imperfect as a character, I have therefore written a prose one, with which I mean, not to complete, but to conclude these Anecdotes of the best and wisest man that ever came within the reach of my personal acquaintance, and I think I might venture to add, that of all or any of my readers:

"Gigantic in knowledge, in virtue, in strength,
Our company closes with JOHNSON at length;
So the Greeks from the cavern of Polypheme past,
When wisest, and greatest, Ulysses came last.
To his comrades contemptuous, we see him look down,
On their wit and their worth with a general frown.
Since from Science' proud tree the rich fruit he receives,
Who could shake the whole trunk while they turn'd a few leaves.



Mr. Johnson deserves to be particularly described. His stature was remarkably high, and his limbs exceedingly large: his strength was more than common I believe, and his activity had been greater I have heard than such a form gave one reason to expect: his features were strongly marked, and his countenance particularly rugged; though the original complexion had certainly been fair, a circumstance somewhat unusual: his sight was near, and otherwise imperfect; yet his eyes, though of a light-grey colour, were so wild, so piercing, and at times so fierce, that fear was I believe the first emotion in the hearts of all his beholders. His mind was so comprehensive, that no language but that he used could have expressed its contents; and so ponderous was his language, that sentiments less lofty and less solid than his were, would have been encumbered, not adorned by it.

Mr. Johnson was not intentionally however a pompous converser; and though he was accused of using big words as they are called, it was only when little ones would not express his meaning as clearly, or when perhaps the elevation of the thought would have been disgraced by a dress less superb. He used to say, "that the size of a man's understanding might always be justly measured by his mirth;" and his own was never contemptible.[1] He would laugh at a stroke of genuine humour, or sudden sally of odd absurdity, as heartily and freely as I ever yet saw any man; and though the jest was often such as few felt besides himself, yet his laugh was irresistible, and was observed immediately to produce that of the company, not merely from the notion that it was proper to laugh when he did, but purely out of want of power to forbear it. He was no enemy to splendour of apparel or pomp of equipage—"Life (he would say) is barren enough surely with all her trappings; let us therefore be cautious how we strip her." In matters of still higher moment he once observed, when speaking on the subject of sudden innovation,—"He who plants a forest may doubtless cut down a hedge; yet I could wish methinks that even he would wait till he sees his young plants grow."

With regard to common occurrences, Mr. Johnson had, when I first knew him, looked on the still-shifting scenes of life till he was weary; for as a mind slow in its own nature, or unenlivened by information, will contentedly read in the same book for twenty times perhaps, the very act of reading it, being more than half the business, and every period being at every reading better understood; while a mind more active or more skilful to comprehend its meaning is made

[1] Hawkins' Life of Johnson, vol. i., p. 258.

sincerely sick at the second perusal; so a soul like his, acute to discern the truth, vigorous to embrace, and powerful to retain it, soon sees enough of the world's dull prospect, which at first, like that of the sea, pleases by its extent, but soon, like that too, fatigues from its uniformity; a calm and a storm being the only variations that the nature of either will admit.

Of Mr. Johnson's erudition the world has been the judge, and we who produce each a score of his sayings, as proofs of that wit which in him was inexhaustible, resemble travellers who having visited Delhi or Golconda, bring home each a handful of Oriental pearl to evince the riches of the Great Mogul. May the Public condescend to accept my *ill-strung* selection with patience at least, remembering only that they are relics of him who was great on all occasions, and, like a cube in architecture, you behold him on each side, and his size still appeared undiminished.

As his purse was ever open to almsgiving, so was his heart tender to those who wanted relief, and his soul susceptible of gratitude, and of every kind impression: yet though he had refined his sensibility, he had not endangered his quiet, by encouraging in himself a solicitude about trifles, which he treated with the contempt they deserve.

It was well enough known before these sheets were published, that Mr. Johnson had a roughness in his manner which subdued the saucy, and terrified the meek: this was, when I knew him, the prominent part of a character which few durst venture to approach so nearly; and which was for that reason in many respects grossly and frequently

undoubtedly to be omitted in his own, whence partiality and prejudice were totally excluded, and truth alone presided in his tongue: a steadiness of conduct the more to be commended, as no man had stronger likings or aversions. His veracity was indeed, from the most trivial to the most solemn occasions, strict, even to severity; he scorned to embellish a story with fictitious circumstances, which (he used to say) took off from its real value. "A story (says Johnson) should be a specimen of life and manners; but if the surrounding circumstances are false, as it is no more a representation of reality, it is no longer worthy our attention."

For the rest—That beneficence which during his life increased the comforts of so many, may after his death be perhaps ungratefully forgotten; but that piety which dictated the serious papers in the "Rambler," will be for ever remembered; for ever, I think, revered. That ample repository of religious truth, moral wisdom, and accurate criticism, breathes indeed the genuine emanations of its great Author's mind, expressed too in a style so natural to him, and so much like his common mode of conversing, that I was myself but little astonished when he told me, that he had scarcely read over one of those inimitable essays before they went to the press.

I will add one or two peculiarities more, before I lay down my pen.—Though at an immeasurable distance from content in the contemplation of his own uncouth form and figure, he did not like another man much the less for being a coxcomb. I mentioned two friends who were particularly fond of looking at themselves in a glass—"They do not surprise me at all by so doing (said Johnson): they see, reflected in that glass, men who have risen from almost the lowest situations in life; one to enormous riches, the other to everything this world can give—rank, fame, and fortune. They see likewise, men who have merited their advancement by the exertion and improvement of those talents which God had given them; and I see not why they should avoid the mirror."

The other singularity I promised to record, is this: That though a man of obscure birth himself, his partiality to people of family was visible on every occasion; his zeal for subordination warm even to bigotry; his hatred to innovation, and reverence for the old feudal times, apparent, whenever any possible manner of shewing them occurred. I have spoken of his piety, his charity, and his truth, the enlargement of his heart, and the delicacy of his sentiments; and when I search for shadow to my portrait, none can I find but what was formed by pride, differently modified as different occasions

shewed it; yet never was pride so purified as Johnson's, at once from meanness and from vanity. The mind of this man was indeed expanded beyond the common limits of human nature, and stored with such variety of knowledge, that I used to think it resembled a royal pleasure-ground, where every plant, of every name and nation, flourished in the full perfection of their powers, and where, though lofty woods and falling cataracts first caught the eye, and fixed the earliest attention of beholders, yet neither the trim parterre nor the pleasing shrubbery, nor even the antiquated ever-greens, were denied a place in some fit corner of the happy valley.

THE END.

POSTSCRIPT.

Naples, Feb. 10, 1786.

SINCE the foregoing went to the press, having seen a passage from Mr. Boswell's "Tour to the Hebrides,"[1] in which it is said, that *I could not get through Mrs. Montagu's Essay on Shakespeare*, I do not delay a moment to declare, that, on the contrary, I have always commended it myself, and heard it commended by every one else; and few things would give me more concern than to be thought incapable of tasting, or unwilling to testify my opinion of its excellence.

[1] See Boswell's note, vol. iv., p. 219.

APOPHTHEGMS, SENTIMENTS,

OPINIONS,

AND

OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS.

ublished in the eleventh volume, pp. 196-216, *of Sir John Hawkins' Collective*



APOPHTHEGMS, SENTIMENTS,

OPINIONS, &c.

DR. JOHNSON said he always mistrusted romantick virtue, as thinking it founded on no fixed principle.

He used to say, that where secrecy or mystery began, vice or roguery was not far off; and that he leads in general an ill life, who stands in fear of no man's observation.

When a friend of his who had not been very lucky in his first wife, married a second, he said—Alas! another instance of the triumph of hope over experience.

Of Sheridan's writings on Elocution, he said, they were a continual renovation of hope, and an unvaried succession of disappointments.

Of musick, he said,—It is the only sensual pleasure without vice.

He used to say, that no man read long together with a folio on his

ridiculous anecdote of him, relative to a question he put to a great divine of his time.

Johnson's account of Lord Lyttelton's envy to[1] Shenstone for his improvements in his grounds, &c., was confirmed by an ingenious writer. Spence was in the house for a fortnight with the Lytteltons, before they offered to shew him Shenstone's place.

When accused of mentioning ridiculous anecdotes in the lives of the poets, he said, he should not have been an exact biographer if he had omitted them. The business of such a one, said he, is to give a complete account of the person whose life he is writing, and to discriminate him from all other persons by any peculiarities of character or sentiment he may happen to have.

He spoke Latin with great fluency and elegance. He said, indeed, he had taken great pains about it.

A very famous schoolmaster said, he had rather take Johnson's opinion about any Latin composition, than that of any other person in England.

Dr. Sumner, of Harrow, used to tell this story of Johnson: they were dining one day, with many other persons, at Mrs. Macaulay's; she had talked a long time at dinner about the natural equality of mankind; Johnson, when she had finished her harangue, rose up from the table, and with great solemnity of countenance, and a bow to the ground, said to the servant, who was waiting behind his chair, Mr. John, pray be seated in my place, and permit me to wait upon you in my turn; your mistress says, you hear, that we are all equal.

When some one was lamenting Foote's unlucky fate in being kicked in Dublin, Johnson said he was glad of it; he is rising in the world, said he; when he was in England, no one thought it worth while to kick him.

He was much pleased with the following repartee: *Fiat experimentum in corpore vili*, said a French physician to his colleague, in speaking of the disorder of a poor man that understood Latin, and who was brought into an hospital; *corpus non tam vile est*, says the patient, *pro quo Christus ipse non dedignatus est mori.*

Johnson used to say, a man was a scoundrel that was afraid of any thing.

After having disused swimming for many years, he went into the river at Oxford, and swam away to a part of it that he had been told of as a dangerous place, and where some one had been drowned.

He waited on Lord Marchmont, to make some inquiries after par-

[1] Query—*of* Shenstone?

ticulars of Mr. Pope's life; his first question was,—What kind of a man was Mr. Pope in his conversation? his lordship answered, that if the conversation did not take something of a lively or epigrammatick turn, he fell asleep, or perhaps pretended to do so.

Talking one day of the patronage the great sometimes affect to give to literature, and literary men,—Andrew Millar, says he, is the Mecænas of the age.

Of the state of learning amongst the Scots, he said,—It is with their learning as with provisions in a besieged town, every one has a mouthful, and no one a bellyfull.

Of Sir Joshua Reynolds he requested three things; that he would not work on a Sunday; that he would read a portion of scripture on that day; and that he would forgive him a debt which he had incurred for some benevolent purpose.

When he first felt the stroke of the palsy, he prayed to God that he would spare his mind, whatever he thought fit to do with his body.

To some lady who was praising Shenstone's poems very much, and who had an Italian greyhound lying by the fire, he said, Shenstone holds amongst poets the same rank your dog holds amongst dogs; he has not the sagacity of the hound, the docility of the spaniel, nor the courage of the bull-dog, yet he is still a pretty fellow.

Johnson said he was better pleased with the commendations bestowed on his account of the Hebrides than on any book he had ever written. Burke, says he, thought well of the philosophy of it; Sir William Jones of the observations on language; and Mr. Jackson of

but has been heard to say, he might have contributed three or four lines, taking together all he had done.

He held all authors very cheap, that were not satisfied with the opinion of the publick about them. He used to say, that every man who writes, thinks he can amuse or inform mankind, and they must be the best judges of his pretensions.

Of Warburton he always spoke well. He gave me, says he, his good word when it was of use to me. Warburton, in the Preface to his Shakespeare, has commended Johnson's Observations on Macbeth.

Two days before he died, he said, with some pleasantry,—Poor Johnson is dying; **** will say, he dies of taking a few grains more of squills than were ordered him; ***** will say, he dies of the scarifications made by the surgeon in his leg.—His last act of understanding is said to have been exerted in giving his blessing to a young lady that requested it of him.

He was always ready to assist any authors in correcting their works, and selling them to booksellers.—I have done writing, said he, myself, and should assist those that do write.

Johnson always advised his friends, when they were about to marry, to unite themselves to a woman of a pious and religious frame of mind.—Fear of the world, and a sense of honour, said he, may have an effect upon a man's conduct and behaviour; a woman without religion is without the only motive that in general can incite her to do well.

When some one asked him for what he should marry, he replied, first, for virtue; secondly, for wit; thirdly, for beauty; and fourthly, for money.

He thought worse of the vices of retirement than of those of society.

He attended Mr. Thrale in his last moments, and stayed in the room praying, as is imagined, till he had drawn his last breath.—His servants, said he, would have waited upon him in this awful period, and why not his friend?

He was extremely fond of reading the lives of great and learned persons. Two or three years before he died, he applied to a friend of his to give him a list of those in the French language that were well written and genuine. He said, that Bolingbroke had declared he could not read Middleton's life of Cicero.

He was a great enemy to the present fashionable way of supposing worthless and infamous persons mad.

He was not apt to judge ill of persons without good reasons; an old friend of his used to say, that in general he thought too well of mankind.

One day, on seeing an old terrier lie asleep by the fire-side at Streatham, he said, Presto, you are, if possible, a more lazy dog than I am.

Being told that Churchill had abused him under the character of Pomposo, in his Ghost,—I always thought, said he, he was a shallow fellow, and I think so still.

The duke of *** once said to Johnson, that every religion had a certain degree of morality in it;—Aye, my lord, answered he, but the Christian religion alone puts it on its proper basis.

When some one asked him how he felt at the indifferent reception of his tragedy at Drury-lane;—Like the Monument, said he, and as unshaken as that fabrick.

Being asked by Dr. Lawrence what he thought the best system of education, he replied,—School in school-hours, and home-instruction in the intervals.

I would never, said he, desire a young man to neglect his business for the purpose of pursuing his studies, because it is unreasonable; I would only desire him to read at those hours when he would otherwise be unemployed. I will not promise that he will be a Bentley; but if he be a lad of any parts, he will certainly make a sensible man.

The picture of him by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which was painted for

thought it possible. He said, Isaac Hawkins Browne had endeavoured at it in English, but could not get beyond thirty verses.

When a Scotsman was one day talking to him of the great writers of that country that were then existing, he said,—We have taught that nation to write, and do they pretend to be our teachers? let me hear no more of the tinsel of Robertson, and the foppery of Dalrymple. He said, Hume had taken his style from Voltaire. He would never hear Hume mentioned with any temper:—A man, said he, who endeavoured to persuade his friend who had the stone to shoot himself!

Upon hearing a lady of his acquaintance commended for her learning, he said,—A man is in general better pleased when he has a good dinner upon his table, than when his wife talks Greek. My old friend, Mrs. Carter, said he, could make a pudding, as well as translate Epictetus from the Greek, and work a handkerchief as well as compose a poem. He thought she was too reserved in conversation upon subjects she was so eminently able to converse upon, which was occasioned by her modesty and fear of giving offence.

Being asked whether he had read Mrs. Macaulay's second volume of the History of England;—No, Sir, says he, nor her first neither.—He would not be introduced to the Abbé Raynal, when he was in England.

He was one night behind the scenes at Drury-lane theatre, when Mr. Garrick was preparing to go upon the stage in the character of Macbeth, and making a great noise by talking, Mr. Garrick desired him to desist, as he would interrupt his feelings;—Punch, says Johnson, has no feelings; had you told me to have held my tongue, I should have known what you meant.

He said, that when he first conversed with Mr. Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, he was very much inclined to believe he had been there; but that he had afterwards altered his opinion.

He was much pleased with Dr. Jortin's Sermons, the language of which he thought very elegant; but thought his life of Erasmus a dull book.

He was very well acquainted with Psalmanaazar, the pretended Formosan, and said, he had never seen the close of the life of any one that he wished so much his own to resemble, as that of him, for its purity and devotion. He told many anecdotes of him; and said, he was supposed by his accent to have been a Gascon. He said, that Psalmanaazar spoke English with the city accent, and coarsely enough. He for some years spent his evenings at a publick house

near Old-Street, where many persons went to talk with him; Johnson was asked whether he ever contradicted Psalmanaazar;—I should as soon, said he, have thought of contradicting a bishop;—so high did he hold his character in the latter part of his life. When he was asked whether he had ever mentioned Formosa before him, he said, he was afraid to mention even China.

He thought "Cato" the best model of tragedy we had; yet he used to say, of all things, the most ridiculous would be, to see a girl cry at the representation of it.

He thought the happiest life was that of a man of business, with some literary pursuits for his amusement; and that in general no one could be virtuous or happy, that was not completely employed.

Johnson had read much in the works of Bishop Taylor; in his Dutch Thomas à Kempis he has quoted him occasionally in the margin.

He is said to have very frequently made sermons for clergymen at a guinea a-piece; that delivered by Dr. Dodd, in the chapel of Newgate, was written by him, as was also his Defence, spoken at the bar of the Old Bailey.

Of a certain lady's entertainments, he said,—What signifies going thither? there is neither meat, drink, nor talk.

He advised Mrs. Siddons to play the part of Queen Catherine in "Henry VIII." and said of her, that she appeared to him to be one of the few persons that the two great corrupters of mankind, money and reputation, had not spoiled.

He had a great opinion of the knowledge procured by conversation

A Scotsman upon his introduction to Johnson said,—I am afraid, Sir, you will not like me, I have the misfortune to come from Scotland:—Sir, answered he, that is a misfortune; but such a one as you and the rest of your countrymen cannot help.

To one who wished him to drink some wine and be jolly, adding, —You know Sir, *in vino veritas:* Sir, answered he, this is a good recommendation to a man who is apt to lie when sober.

When he was first introduced to General Paoli, he was much struck with his reception of him; he said he had very much the air of a man who had been at the head of a nation: he was particularly pleased with his manner of receiving a stranger at his own house, and said it had dignity and affability joined together.

Johnson said, he had once seen Mr. Stanhope, lord Chesterfield's son, at Dodsley's shop, and was so much struck with his aukward manners and appearance, that he could not help asking Mr. Dodsley who he was.

Speaking one day of tea, he said,—What a delightful beverage must that be, that pleases all palates, at a time when they can take nothing else at breakfast!

To his censure of fear in general, he made however one exception, with respect to the fear of death, *timorum maximus;* he thought that the best of us were but unprofitable servants, and had much reason to fear.

Johnson thought very well of lord Kaimes's "Elements of Criticism;" of other of his writings he thought very indifferently, and laughed much at his opinion, that war was a good thing occasionally, as so much valour and virtue were exhibited in it. A fire, says Johnson, might as well be thought a good thing; there is the bravery and address of the firemen employed in extinguishing it; there is much humanity exerted in saving the lives and properties of the poor sufferers; yet, says he, after all this, who can say a fire is a good thing?

Speaking of schoolmasters, he used to say, they were worse than the Egyptian task-masters of old. No boy, says he, is sure any day he goes to school to escape a whipping: how can the schoolmaster tell what the boy has really forgotten, and what he has neglected to learn; what he has had no opportunities of learning, and what he has taken no pains to get at the knowledge of? yet for any of these, however difficult they may be, the boy is obnoxious to punishment.

He used to say something tantamount to this: When a woman affects learning, she makes a rivalry between the two sexes for the

me accomplishments, which ought not to be, their provinces being fferent. Milton said before him,

> " For contemplation he and valour form'd,
> For softness she and sweet attractive grace."

He used to say, that in all family-disputes the odds were in favour the husband, from his superior knowledge of life and manners: he as, nevertheless, extremely fond of the company and conversation women, and was early in life much attached to a most beautiful oman at Lichfield, of a rank superior to his own.

He never suffered any one to swear before him. When ———, a ertine, but a man of some note, was talking before him, and inter-rding his stories with oaths, Johnson said, Sir, all this swearing will o nothing for our story, I beg you will not swear. The narrator ent on swearing: Johnson said, I must again intreat you not to ear. He swore again: Johnson quitted the room.

He was no great friend to puns, though he once by accident made singular one. A person who affected to live after the Greek anner, and to anoint himself with oil, was one day mentioned before m. Johnson, in the course of conversation on the singularity of s practice, gave him the denomination of, This man of *Greece*, or *rease*, as you please to take it.

Of a member of parliament, who, after having harangued for some ours in the house of commons, came into a company where Johnson as, and endeavoured to talk him down, he said, This man has a pulse his tongue.

son, is a scoundrel:—having nothing in particular to do himself, and having none of his time appropriated, he was a troublesome guest to persons who had much to do.

He rose as unwillingly as he went to bed.

He said, he was always hurt when he found himself ignorant of any thing.

Being asked by a young man this question, Pray, Sir, where and what is Palmyra?—Johnson replied, Sir, it is a hill in Ireland, which has palm-trees growing on the top, and a bog at the bottom, and therefore is called Palm-mira; but observing that the young man believed him in earnest, and thanked him for the intelligence, he undeceived him, and not only gave him a geographical description of it, but related its history.

He was extremely accurate in his computation of time. He could tell how many heroick Latin verses could be repeated in such a given portion of it; and was anxious that his friends should take pains to form in their minds some measure for estimating the lapse of it.

Of authors he used to say, that as they think themselves wiser or wittier than the rest of the world, the world, after all, must be the judge of their pretensions to superiority over them.

Complainers, said he, are always loud and clamorous.

He thought highly of Mandeville's Treatise on the Hypochondriacal Disease.

I wrote, said Johnson, the first seventy lines in the "Vanity of Human Wishes," in the course of one morning, in that small house beyond the church at Hampstead. The whole number was composed before I committed a single couplet to writing. The same method I pursued in regard to the Prologue on opening Drury-Lane Theatre. I did not afterwards change more than a word in it, and that was done at the remonstrance of Garrick; I did not think his criticism just, but it was necessary that he should be satisfied with what he was to utter.

To a gentleman who expressed himself in disrespectful terms of Blackmore, one of whose poetick bulls he happened just then to recollect, Dr. Johnson answered,—I hope, Sir, a blunder, after you have heard what I shall relate, will not be reckoned decisive against a poet's reputation: when I was a young man, I translated Addison's Latin poem on the "Battle of the Pigmies and the Cranes," and must plead guilty to the following couplet:

> "Down from the guardian boughs the nests they flung,
> And kill'd the yet unanimated young."

And yet I trust I am no blockhead. I afterwards changed the word *kill'd* into *crush'd*.

When Bolingbroke died, and bequeathed the publication of his works to Mallett, Johnson observed,—His lordship has loaded a blunderbuss against religion, and has left a scoundrel to pull the trigger.

Were you ever, Sir, said a person to Johnson, in company with Dr. Warburton? He answered, I never saw him till one evening, about a week ago, at the bishop of St. ———'s: at first he looked surlily at me; but, after we had been jostled into conversation, he took me to a window, asked me some questions, and before we parted, was so well pleased with me, that he patted me. You always, Sir, preserved a respect for him? Yes, and justly; when as yet I was in no favour with the world, he spoke well of me,[1] and I hope I never forgot the obligation.

I am convinced, said he to a friend, I ought to be present at divine service more frequently than I am; but the provocations given by ignorant and affected preachers too often disturb the mental calm which otherwise would succeed to prayer. I am apt to whisper to myself on such occasions, How can this illiterate fellow dream of fixing attention, after we have been listening to the sublimest truths, conveyed in the most chaste and exalted language, throughout a liturgy, which must be regarded as the genuine offspring of piety impregnated by wisdom. Take notice, however, though I make this confession respecting myself, I do not mean to recommend the fastidiousness that sometimes leads me to exchange congregational for solitary worship.—He was at Streatham church when Dodd's first application to him was made, and went out of his pew immediately

At one period of the Doctor's life he was reconciled to the bottle. Sweet wines, however, were his chief favourites; when none of these were before him, he would sometimes drink port with a lump of sugar in every glass. The strongest liquors, and in very large quantities, produced no other effect on him than moderate exhilaration. Once, and but once, he is known to have had his dose, a circumstance which he himself discovered, on finding one of his sesquipedalian words hang fire; he then started up, and gravely observed,—I think it time we should go to bed. After a ten years' forbearance of every fluid except tea and sherbet, I drank, said he, one glass of wine to the health of Sir Joshua Reynolds, on the evening of the day on which he was knighted; I never swallowed another drop, till old Madeira was prescribed to me as a cordial during my present indisposition, but this liquor did not relish as formerly, and I therefore discontinued it.

His knowledge in manufactures was extensive, and his comprehension relative to mechanical contrivances was still more extraordinary. The well-known Mr. Arkwright pronounced him to be the only person who, on a first view, understood both the principle and powers of his most complicated piece of machinery.

Garrick, said he, I hear complains that I am the only popular author of his time who has exhibited no praise of him in print; but he is mistaken, Akenside has forborne to mention him. Some indeed are lavish in their applause of all who come within the compass of their recollection; yet he who praises every body, praises nobody; when both scales are equally loaded, neither can preponderate.

A *congé d'elire*, said a gentleman, has not the force of a positive command, but implies only a strong recommendation. Yes, replied Johnson, who overheard him, just such a recommendation as if I should throw you out of a three-pair-of-stairs window, and recommend you to fall to the ground.

He would not allow the verb *derange*, a word at present much in use, to be an English word. Sir, said a gentleman who had some pretensions to literature, I have seen it in a book. Not in a *bound* book, said Johnson; *disarrange* is the word we ought to use instead of it.

He thought very favourably of the profession of the law, and said, that the sages thereof, for a long series backward, had been friends to religion. Fortescue says, that their afternoon's employment was the study of the Scriptures.

LETTERS FROM MRS. HILL BOOTHBY TO DR. JOHNSON.



THE FOLLOWING ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM

MRS. HILL BOOTHBY TO DR. JOHNSON

WERE ALL NUMBERED AND LABELLED BY HIMSELF, AND BOUND TOGETHER IN A THIN QUARTO VOLUME.[1]

LETTER I.

"July 30, 1753.

SIR,

I ASSURE you I esteemed your request to write to and hear from me, as an honour done me, and received your letter with uch pleasure: most people, and particularly a lady, would tremble taking up the pen to reply to a letter from Mr. Johnson; but I had e pleasure of experiencing so much candour and goodness in the an, that I have no fear of the eminent genius, extensive learning, curate judgment, and every other happy talent which distinguish and

towards me: tell me my faults, and assist me in rectifying them. Do not give me the least reason to doubt your sincerity by any thing that has the air of compliment. Female vanity has, I believe, no small share in the increase of the difficulties you have found in one part of your labours; I mean, that of *explaining* in your Dictionary the *general and popular language.* You should therefore treat this vanity as an enemy, and be very far from throwing any temptation in its way.

I have great obligations to Dr. Laurence and his family. They have hearts like yours; and therefore I do not wonder they are partial in judging of me, who have a friendly and grateful heart. You are in the right: I should have been most heinously offended, if you had omitted a particular inquiry after my dear charge. They are all six in perfect health, and can make as much noise as any six children in England. They amply reward all my daily labours for them: the eldest has her dear mother's disposition and capacity. I am enabled to march on steadily with my shattered frame; how long, I think not of, but chearfully wait for

'kind Nature's signal of retreat'

whenever it pleases God.

I hope, however, to see you the *author of a Great Dictionary* before I go, and to have the pleasure of joining with a whole Nation in your applause: and when you have put into their hands the means of speaking and writing the English language with as much purity and propriety as it is capable of being spoken and wrote, give me leave to recommend to you your future studies and labours—let them all be devoted to the glory of God, to exemplify the true use of all languages and tongues. *The vanity of all human wishes*, you have finely and forcibly proved; what is then left for you, but to seek after certain and permanent happiness, divine and eternal goods,

'(These goods he grants, who grants the power to gain,)'

and with all the great talents bestowed on you, to call others to the same pursuit? How should I rejoice to see *your* pen *wholly* employed in the glorious Christian cause; inviting all into the ways of pleasantness; proving and displaying the only paths to peace! Wherever you have chosen this most interesting subject of Religion in your Ramblers, I have warmly wished you never to chuse any other. You see, Sir, I am much inclined to indulge the liberty you have given me of conversing with you in this way. But I will not

ease myself longer at the hazard of tiring you. One request, how-
ver, I must make; some of those parts of your life, which, you say,
ou pass in idleness, pray, for the future, bestow on one who has a
eat regard for you, will highly value every testimony of your esteem,
nd is, Sir,

Your much obliged friend and humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY.

My good wishes attend Miss Williams. Mr. Fitzherbert returns
ou his compliments. We are now at Tissington, near Ashbourn,
erbyshire."

LETTER II.

"Tissington, Dec. 4, 1753.

DEAR SIR,

You might be very sure that something extraordinary and un-
voidable must keep me so long silent, to a person whom from every
notive I esteem and regard, and consequently love to converse with.
will honestly own to you likewise, that I was extremely pleased with
our letter, as one of the prettiest things I ever read in my life, and
onged to *praise you* in reply to it, as a proof of my being convinced,
hat, *as a friend*, I owed you this honest tribute. But, alas! all my
urposes of writing were prevented; first, by a series of family engage-

dispensation of Providence a blessing; enjoy the sweet portion, nor quarrel with the medicinal draught, because it is bitter. What I have hinted to you, of *perplexity*, &c. is in the confidence of friendship.

May all your labours be blest with success! Excuse my trembling hand, which cannot do more at present than assure you, I am, dear Sir,

Your much obliged and sincere friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Some acquaintance of mine at a distance will have it that you sometimes write an Adventurer; for this reason, because they like some of those papers better than any except the Ramblers. I have not seen any. Pray tell me if I must; for, if your pen has any share in them, I shall take it ill to be deprived of the benefit. Be so good as to let me hear from you, when you have leisure."

LETTER III.

"Tissington, Dec. 29, 1753.

DEAR SIR,

You very obligingly say, 'Few are so busy as not to find time to do what they delight in doing.' That I have been one of those few, my not having, till now, found time to answer your last kind letter, may convince you. My indisposition, and confinement on that account, made it necessary for me to double my application for my little flock; and, as my strength increased, I found occasions to exercise its increase also; so that I really have not had a moment to spare. I know you will be better pleased to infer from hence that my health is much mended, than you would be with the finest and most artful arrangement of abstracted reasoning that ever was penned. I have been a great moralizer; and, perhaps, if all my speculative chains were linked together, they would fill a folio as large as the largest of those many wrote by the philosophical Duchess of Newcastle, and be just as useful as her labours. But I have wholly given up all attempts of this sort, convinced by experience that they could at most afford only a present relief. The one remedy for all and every kind of sorrow, the deeply-experienced Royal Prophet thus expresses:

'In the multitude of sorrows which I had in my heart, *thy* comforts have refreshed my soul.'

'The sovereign Balm for every heart-felt wound
Is only in the HEAVENLY Gilead found:

Whate'er the sage Philosophers pretend,
Man's wisdom may awhile Man's pain SUSPEND;
But can no more—Wisdom DIVINE must cure,
And Love inspire, which ALL things can endure.'

As I think, I write; and express my thoughts in words that first offer, *sans* premeditation, as you see. As I have told you before, I write to the friend, not to *the* Mr. Johnson who himself writes better than any man. I shall comply with your request, and not inclose this; though at the same time I am conscious I have so little claim to a place among your riches, that a waste-paper drawer will be a much properer one for my poor productions: however, if they have this merit, and you regard them as proofs that I much esteem you, they will answer my purpose, which is that of being regarded as,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate and sincere friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

My jewels are all well.

One reason for my inclosing my former letters was the not being sure of your right direction, but I hope I have recollected one. You have not answered my question in my last postscript."

LETTER IV.

"Saturday, Feb. 16, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

I wonder not at your hesitating to impart a secret to a woman; but am the more obliged to you for communicating it as a secret, after so hesitating. Such a mark of your deliberate confidence shall be strictly regarded; and I shall seek for letter T, that I may read with *redoubled* pleasure. I want to know when the GREAT DICTIONARY will prove itself truly so, by appearing. Every thing that relates to Mr. Johnson has the best wishes of a friendly heart; here I include Mrs. Williams; and desire she will accept her share, which I am sure she will with pleasure, on account of my being, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend, and much obliged humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY.

As a friend of yours and Dr. L——'s, and one who seems worthy to be such, I am solicitous to inquire after the health of Dr. Bathurst.

Excuse hurry and its effects; I mean, my health is very weak, and I have much to do."

LETTER V.

"Bath, March 11, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

It is impossible for me not to pay due regard to your kind solicitude for my better health. I shall therefore begin this letter, as you enjoin me, with an account of it, and tell you it really is better. The waters did not agree with me for some days after I began drinking them; but a little medicinal assistant administered by Dr. Hartley has so reconciled us, that for a week past they have been very salutary, given me an appetite, strength to use exercise without fatigue, whole nights of sweet sleep, and, what some people here would even prefer to these, better looks. For all these I am truly thankful to the Giver of all good. You are doubtful whether I am not hurt by needless anxiety. Be no longer so; but be sure I am not—*sufficient unto the day, is the evil thereof*, is my preservative from all anxious thought for the morrow. I look not forward but to an eternity of peace and joy, and in this view all VAIN solicitude for the things of this life is taken away.

You find pleasure in writing letters, and to ME. I will put a stop to your further inquiry into the cause of this, by most truly assuring you, you give me a very great pleasure in reading your letters. I earnestly wish to be indeed your friend; and as far as I am capable of being such, I beg you always to be certain you are conferring an obligation when you confide in me, or command me. Immediately

after I received your last letter, I tripped to the booksellers for the *Gentleman's Magazine*:[1] many masterly strokes in the picture would have made the hand known to me, had not you named it. You will not be displeased when I tell you, *one* circumstance drew from me a silent tear, viz. *one of the last acts of nature*, &c. and this melting was part from natural tenderness, part from sympathy. How then can I condemn your sorrow? Yet I must, even because I have myself formerly been overwhelmed with fruitless grief for the loss of a friend; and therefore by miserable experience can warn all from splitting on this rock. Fly from it. Many are the resources shewn to fly to; but believe me, there is but one that can avail—religion.

My situation here allows me but a very small portion of time to myself. Mr. Fitzherbert loves company, and has a good deal. I have some acquaintance, and a few friends here, who by turns engage me. Thus, though I never go into the public scenes here, I can seldom be alone: but I was determined to secure half an hour, to thank you, and to tell you, whenever you favour me with your letters, no engagements shall prevent my assuring you, I receive them in every place with the greatest pleasure, and am, and shall be,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Overlook all defects."

Superscribed "To Mr. Johnson, at his house in Gough Square, London."

am, thank God, better than when I first came to this place; and so chearful, that those of my acquaintance who think there is no other use for SPIRITS but to ENJOY LIFE IN PUBLIC, to speak in their own style, wonder I do not frequent the rooms, balls, &c. But the dreaming part of my life is over, and all my pursuits are bent towards the securing—

'A sober certainty of waking bliss.'

I fly from dissipation to serious recollection, a sort of labour which is succeeded by a chearful rest.

Sir Charles Grandison I have not read. The reflection of having thrown away much precious time formerly in useless and unprofitable reading makes me extremely cautious; and I am in a bookseller's shop, like a Bee in a garden, which you have seen fly round and round, from flower to flower, nor ever rests on any till it finds one which will yield pure honey. So I just touched Sir Charles Grandison in my examining flight; but, from my instinct, found there was no honey for ME. Yet am I far from saying there may not be *miel tres doux* for other kind of bees. However, I find the few to whose judgement I pay the greatest deference agree with you. Mr. Richardson's intention I honour; but to apply your own words TRULY on this occasion—'The best intention may be troublesome.' And perhaps the same way and manner of executing may weary. His mistaking the manners, and life, of those whom you truly say we CONDESCEND to call GREAT people, is, I think, very pardonable. It would not be worth a Naturalist's while to spend the greatest part of his time in observing the various tinctures a camelion takes from every body it approaches; and yet he must do so, to give a true representation of the colours of its life. You can make the application.

I am intirely of your opinion with regard to education. I will labour all I can to produce plenty. But sanguine hopes will never tempt me to feel the torture of cutting disappointment. I have seen even Pauls plant, and Apollos water in vain, and am convinced God only can give the increase. Mine is a fruitful soil. Miss Fitzherbert is yet every thing I can wish. Her eldest brother, a fine lively boy; but, *entre nous*, too indulgent a father will make it necessary for him to be sent to school; the sooner the better. Do you know of any school where a boy of six years old would be taken care of, chiefly as to his morals, and taught English, French, &c. till of a fit age for a public school?

You do not say a word of the Dictionary. Miss Fitzherbert and I

are impatient for its publication. I know you will be so indulgent to a friend, as to let me have the pleasure of hearing from you soon. My sincere regard and best wishes will always attend you, as I am,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

A rainy day has prevented my drinking the waters, or I should have hazarded the head-ach, rather than have been longer silent."

LETTER VII.

"Bath, May 20, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

How was I surprized this morning, when, on opening a letter from you, with the pleasing expectation of its being a reply to one I wrote to you above a week ago, I found you kindly complaining of my silence. The reflections you begin your letter with seemed to me, at first, as if you had mistaken in directing it to me, as I well knew I felt, and had very lately expressed, a regard you could not have the least doubt of. The servant assures me he put my letter into the post-box himself. The post-master assures me, none put there ever fail. Yet somehow this has failed. I shall be sorry if it does not reach you, as there were some parts of it (for it was no short one) wrote with the freedom and confidence of friendship; and the whole

LETTER VIII.

"Tissington, June 5, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

The first leisure moment I have, is most justly due to the compliance with your kind request to be informed of our arrival here; and with much pleasure I tell you, that, after a very good journey of four days, we were met with the bloom of health, and the endearing smiles of innocence, last Friday, at Tissington. The sensations of joy and thankfulness I experienced on this interview with the little creatures are not to be described: but, I am persuaded, no heart but her's who bequeathed them to me, ever so truly owned and received them as children.

The loss of *that* letter I can no way account for—think no more of it. The subject of part of it was my then situation, and some reflections on the exceeding decline of conversation I observed in general; in which there seemed to be no other propriety than that of trifling French words to trifling somethings, not worthy of being called *thoughts*. I mentioned *Adventurers*, &c. and expressed, as well as I could, my particular satisfaction in Mr. Johnson's bullion, or rather pure stirling, amidst the tinsel base-mixed stuff I met with, and the high value I set on his letters. I gave you an abstract of Farneworth's History, which I have not time to repeat. I thank you for thinking of a school, and recommending one. Your recommendation would immediately fix me, if I *alone* was to determine. Two have been particularly recommended to Mr. Fitzherbert, Fulham and Wandsworth; and we have for some time been making all the inquiry we can into both. The last I have many objections to. I shall be much obliged to you for a particular account of your friend; as—how many boys he takes—his rules and rates—and also if he has a French and dancing-master. I am strongly biassed towards a man you speak so well of. That—*well instructed in Virtue*, is the thing I want; and a visit from you now and then, to confirm this instruction, is a high inducement. To some proper place I hope I shall be permitted to take this dear boy this Summer, when I also hope for the pleasure of seeing you. I know it will be a pleasure to you to assist me in an affair of such consequence, on many accounts; and I shall not say any more

to Mr. Fitzherbert about Fulham till I hear from you; which, I assure you, I never do without great satisfaction; as I am,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

H. Boothby.

Excuse the effects of hurry. I have a cold I brought from Bath; otherwise I am in much better health than I have been for above twelve months past."

LETTER IX.

"Tissington, July 1, 1754.

Dear Sir,

Truth is my delight: no establishment of custom will, I hope, ever make me deviate from it. And as an excuse seems to me a kind of screen, which has at least the appearance of concealing something we would not have seen, I make none. Nor shall I now say more upon my long silence, than that I have thought and felt it such myself, and from thence leave you to infer that it has been unavoidable. Your last letter was such a one as I expected from *you* on such a subject,—that is, so clear, full, candid, sensible, kind, and friendly, as I hardly ever saw from any other. If I had your talent of expression, I could expatiate on this letter with great pleasure; but as I have not, I must deny myself this indulgence, and treasure up those observa-

must be submitted to, with the view of avoiding greater. I cannot help, with much pity, regarding a mere fox-hunter as an animal little superior to those he pursues, and dreading every path that seems to lead towards this miserable chace.

My health continues tolerable, thank God; yours, and every other good, I sincerely wish you. If present resolutions hold, I may have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with you; however, I hope for that of hearing from you. I beg you never to let me lose one of your reflections upon life. Drop them on the paper just as they arise from your mind; I love them, and profit by them; and I am pleased particularly sometimes to find one of my own, brightened and adorned with your strong and masterly colouring, which gives me back the image of my mind, like the meeting an old acquaintance after absence, but extremely improved. I have no reason, I own, to expect a letter from you soon; but think not that, because I have not before now desired one, I do not deserve one, because I can with truth assure you I have this claim. Nobody can more value your correspondence, or be with greater esteem than I am,

Dear Sir,

Your friend, and obliged humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER X.

"Tissington, August 5, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

I have, as you desired, endeavoured to think about and examine your hypothesis; but this dear little boy, and the change resolved on for him, would not suffer me to speculate in a general way to much purpose. Must you not allow our perception of pain and of pleasure to be in an equal degree? Or does it not often happen, that we are even more sensible to pain than pleasure? If so; *those changes which do not increase our present happiness, will not enable us to feel the next vicissitude of gladness with quicker*, but only with equal, or with a less degree of perception; and consequently we shall be either no gainers or losers on the whole. And yet, though I am sure I shall experience the truth of this, if I only see you for a few hours, I shall however desire to see you. This is an enigma I will leave to your solution, and proceed to tell you, that, if nothing intervenes to change it, the present resolution is, that we are to set out for Fulham on Wednesday sevennight, the 14th of August. On account of the dear

little ones I shall leave here, I shall be obliged to make a speedy return; and propose staying only a week at a friend's in Putney, to see every thing fixed, as well as I can, for my young man. But I will contrive to see you and a very few more of my friends in town; and you shall hear from me, as to the *when* and *where*, from Putney. You, full of kindness, sitting in your study, will, I know, say—'Why does she hurry herself about so?'—I answer, to save you the pain of this thought, that travelling always is very serviceable to me, in point of health.

You will never provoke me to contradict you, unless you contradict me, without reasons and exemplication to support your opinion. 'Tis very true—all these things you have enumerated, are equally pitiable with a poor fox-hunter. 'Tis not in man to direct, either his own, or the way of others aright; nor do I ever look but to the supreme and all-wise Governor of the universe, either for direction, or with hope. I know you kindly mean to avert the pain of disappointment by discouraging expectation; but mine is never sanguine with regard to any thing here. Mine is truly a life of faith, not of sight; and thus I never, as Milton says—

> —— 'bate one jot
> Of Heart or Hope; but still bear up, and steer
> Right onward.' ——

I like not the conclusion of your last letter; it is an ill compliment to call that mean, which the person you speak to most highly esteems and values. Know yourself and me better for the future, and be

days. This evening we take dear Billy to school; and till I have seen how he settles there, I am fixed here. Form some little plan for me, to be executed towards the latter end of this week; for really I am not capable of forming any myself at this time—and communicate it by the penny-post in a billet to me at Mrs. D'Aranda's in Putney. I and my little companions here are well, and all has a favourable aspect with regard to the dear boy's situation. I never forget any thing you say; and now have in my mind a very just and useful observation of yours, viz. 'The effect of education is very precarious. But, what can be hoped without it? Though the harvest may be blasted, we must yet cultivate the ground,' &c. I am, (somewhat abruptly)—but, I am,

Dear Sir,

Your much obliged and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XII.

"Sunday Evening, Holborn Bridge.

DEAR SIR,

Do you think I would have been almost two days in town without seeing you, if I could either have been at liberty to have made you a visit, or have received one from you? No: you cannot think so unjustly of me. The truth is, I have been in a hurry ever since I came here, and am not well. To-morrow I am obliged to go a little way into the country. On Tuesday, Dr. Lawrence has engaged me to spend the evening at his house, where I hope to meet you, and fix with you some hour in which to see you again on Wednesday. Thursday, down towards Derbyshire. Thus is whirled about this little machine; which, however, contains a mind unsubject to rotation. Such you will always find it.

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XIII.

"Putney, August 23, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

Unless a very great change is made in you, you can never have the least reason to apprehend the loss of my esteem. Caprice may have accompanied the morning, and perhaps noon of my life, but my evening has banished that fickle wanderer; and as now I fix not

ithout deliberation and well-weighed choice, I am not subject to hange.

Your very kind visit was a new obligation; which if I could express y sense of, it must be less. Common favours it is easy to acknowdge; but a delicate sensibility to real proofs of esteem and friendship e not easily to be made known.

Mr. Millar's method seems to me to be a very right one, and for the asons you give; and if he will please to carry the catalogue to Mr. Vhiston, by the time I shall be in town, I imagine he will have ppraised the books; and then we will proceed to the disposal of em, as you shall judge best. Mr. Fitzherbert I have not seen since had the pleasure of seeing you, and therefore cannot yet say when I n again have that pleasure; but I hope some time next week to repay our visit. I have an aching head to-day, so great an enemy to my clination, that it will not let me say more than that I am, with much steem and true regard,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. Boothby.

Mrs. D'Aranda and the young ladies desire compliments. My gards to Miss Williams."

LETTER XIV.

can fully communicate to him all you was so good as to execute for us in the library affair, and your opinion concerning the disposal of the books. I only saw enough of you in Putney, and in town, to make me wish to see more. It will soon be in your power to gratify this wish. Place is a thing pretty indifferent to me, but London I am least fond of any; however, the conversation of some few in it will soon take off my dislike. I do not mean this as a letter; call it what you will. It is only to tell you why I did not see you again; that I hope a future time will recompense for this loss; that we are safe here; and that every where I am, and shall be, with much esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

You can write amidst the tattle of women, because your attention is so strong to sense, that you are deaf to sound. I wonder whether you could write amidst the prattle of children—no better than I, I really believe, if they were your own children, as I find these prattlers are mine."

LETTER XV.

"Tissington, Sept. 28, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

Do you wait to hear again from me? or why is it that I am so long without the pleasure of hearing from you? Had my brother kept his appointment, I should not have failed to give you a second letter sooner; now is the first moment I could tell you his determination concerning the books. But first I am to give you his compliments and thanks for your part in the affair. He thinks, as the sum offered by Mr. Whiston is so small a one, and his son is likely to be a scholar; it will be best to suspend any sale of the books for the present; and if, on further consideration, he finds he must part with them, then to do it in the method you proposed; as, that way, some may be selected for his son's use, and the rest sold, so as to make more than to be parted with to a bookseller. Upon considering both sides of the question, he rather chuses the hazard on one side, with the certainty of greater profits in case of success, than to accept of Mr. Whiston's sum for all the books at present. But I am preparing for a journey to town; and there, I hope, I shall have an opportunity of explaining upon this subject in a clearer manner; for, though I

know what I would say, I cannot say it clearly, amidst the confusion of ideas in my head at this time. I beg to hear from you; however little I may deserve, I cannot help much desiring a letter from you. If your taste and judgment cannot allow me any thing as a writer; yet let my merit as a sincere friend demand a return. In this demand I will yield to none; for, I am sure, none can have a truer esteem and friendship towards you, than

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XVI.

"Tuesday, October 29, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

From what Mrs. Lawrence told me, I have had daily hopes of the pleasure of seeing you here, which has prevented me desiring that favour. I am much mortified by the disappointment of having been so long in town, without one of the greatest satisfactions I promised myself in it—your conversation. And, in short, if you will not come here, I must make you a visit. I should have called upon you before this time, if the settling my dear little charge here had not employed me so much at home; now, that business is almost completed. Pray, say when and where, I may have the pleasure of seeing you. Perhaps you may not imagine how much I am affected by the not receiving

each other's hours, and I secure against a second mortifying disappointment, I send to tell you, that, not being an evening rapper at people's doors, whenever I do go out, it is in a morning—a town-morning—between noon and three o'clock; and that for the next four mornings I must be out. Now can't you as conveniently let me have the pleasure of seeing you at five some evening? Name any one; and you shall have your tea as I can make it, and a gratification infinitely superior, I know, in your estimation to any other, that of seeing your presence gives great pleasure to a friend; for such I most sincerely am to you,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XVIII.

"DEAR SIR,

I have company, from whom I run, just to say, I have often rejoiced to see your hand, but never so much as now. Come and see me as soon as you can; and I shall forgive an absence which has indeed given me no small disturbance.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XIX.

"DEAR SIR,

Perhaps you are the only author in England, who could make a play a very acceptable present to me. But you have; and, I assure you, I shall leave your Irene behind me, when I go hence, in my little repository of valuable things. Miss Fitzherbert is much delighted, and desires her best thanks. The author's company would have more enhanced the value of the present; but that we will hope for soon. I am much obliged to you for the good account of the Lawrences, and for many things which increase my regard, and confirm me in being,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

DR. JOHNSON TO MISS BOOTHBY.

From Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, vol. ii., p. 321.

"January 1, 1755.

DEAREST MADAM,

Though I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the New Year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish indeed I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes; yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to,

Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

From Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, vol. ii., p. 392.

" DEAREST MADAM,

Nobody but you can recompence me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night. Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he left you; I concluded, when he staid so long, that he staid to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear,

kind conduct to me, in particular lately, you, who are accustomed to make just inferences and conclusions, might have easily made the true ones, and have discovered, there was too much to be expressed. To a less penetrating person, this might occasion a surprize of neglect; but I could not have imagined you would or could have been so deceived. My friendship is a poor acquisition; but you see, it is so far valuable, that it is firm and constant. Then, you will say, it is not a poor acquisition. Well; be it what it will; be assured you have as far as it can ever extend, either to please or serve you. But do not suspect me. I have an opportunity just now to send this—therefore no more till I see you; except that I am, indeed with much esteem, gratitude, and affection,

Dear Sir,

Your friend,

H. B.

I hope I am better, and Miss F. in a good way. She has the measles."

LETTER XXI.

"Tissington, June 15, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

That we arrived safe here, and had every thing to make our journey easy and pleasant, is most of what I have time to say, except that, amidst the smiles of the country, a country I love, my native one, and the smiles of my children, whom I love much more, I am sensible you are an hundred and forty miles distant. This is not like forgetting you. At present I am the worse for the fatigue of travelling; which, contrary to custom, was a great one to me: but I hope this pure, sweet air, will have a great influence upon my health, when I have recovered my fatigue. Your little friend is, I think, the better for her four days exercise. You were the subject of our conversation many times on the road, and will often be so. I hope I shall soon find you think of us. I can never forget the hours you generously bestowed on one who has no claim or merit, but that of being,

Dear Sir,

With much esteem, your grateful and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Miss Fitzherbert's love to you; no small treasure, I assure you."

LETTER XXII.

"Tissington, July 4, 1755.

Two letters from Mr. Johnson! Why did I not reply to the first kind greeting before he answered my letter? I don't love to be outdone in kindness; and I was both angry and pleased, when I saw your second letter, my good friend. But the truth is, I have been lazy. It had been long since I had known what quiet was; and I found in myself, both inwardly and outwardly, a strong inclination to enjoy it. I read your letters over and over; but till now, I could not sit down to write to you. It is true, I am abstracted from common life, as you say. What is common life, but a repetition of the same things over and over? And is it made up of such things, as a thinking, reflecting being can bear the repetition of, over and over, long, without weariness? I have found not; and therefore my view is turned to the things of that life, which must be begun here, is ever new and increasing, and will be continued eternally hereafter. Yet, mistake me not, I am so far from excluding social duties from this life, that I am sure they are a part of it, and can only be duly and truly exerted in it. Common life, I call not social life; but, in general, that dissipation and wandering which leads from the duties of it. While I was in town, I did not feel myself as a part of that multitude around me. The objects I saw at dinners, &c. *except yourself*, when

and complete redemption and restoration for us. Is this enthusiasm? Indeed it is truth: and, I trust, you will some time be sure it is so; and then, and not till then, will you be happy, as I ardently wish you. I am much better. My cough is now nothing, and my voice almost clear. I am weak yet, too weak to attempt to see Dovedale. But keep your resolution, and come and see us; and I hope I shall be able to walk there with you. I give you leave to fear the loss of me, but doubt not in the least of my affection and friendship; this I cannot forgive. Miss Fitzherbert says, she does not forget her promise. She is studying your Ramblers to form her style, and hopes soon to give you a specimen of good writing. She is very well, and flying about the fields every fair day, as the rest are.

Let me hear from you as soon as you can. I love your letters, and always rejoice to find myself in your thoughts. You are very frequently in mine; and seldom without a petition to Heaven for you. Poor is that love, which is bounded by the narrow space of this temporal scene; mine extends to an eternity; and I cannot desire any thing less for you, for whom I have the sincerest regard, than endless happiness; as a proof that I am truly,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

The great Dictionary is placed in full view, on a desk in my own room. I am sorry you have met with some disappointments in the next edition. Best wishes to Miss Williams.

Do not say you have heard from me at the good Doctor's. I should write to him, but have laid out all my present stock of time on you. O—chaises and such things are only transient disquiets. I have, on a fine still day, observed the water, as smooth as glass, suddenly curled on the surface by a little gust of air, and presently still and smooth again. No more than this are my *chaise troubles*. Like Hamlet's Ghost, *'Tis here—'tis gone.*"

LETTER XXIII.

"Tissington, July 23, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

To answer your questions—I *can* say that I love your letters, because it is very true that I do love them; and I do not know any one reason why I may not declare this truth; so much do I think it

would be for my reputation, that I should chuse to declare it, not only to you, but to all who know you. Ask yourself, why I value your affection; for you cannot be so much a stranger to yourself, as not to know many reasons why I *ought highly* to value it; and I hope you are not so much a stranger to me, as not to know I would always do as I ought, though, perhaps, in this case, the doing so has not the merit of volition—for in truth, I cannot help it. So much in reply to the two first sentences in your last letter. It is no unpleasing circumstance to me, that the same messenger who has taken a letter to the post-house at Ashbourn from me to you, has twice brought back one from you to me. Possibly, while I am now replying to your last, you may be giving me a reply to mine again. Both ways I shall be pleased, whether I happen to be beforehand with you, or you again with me.

I am desirous that, in the great and one thing necessary, you should think as I do; and I am persuaded you some time will. I will not enter into a controversy with you. I am sure I never can this way convince you in any point wherein we may differ; nor can any mortal convince me, by human arguments, that there is not a divine evidence for divine truths. Such the Apostle plainly defines Faith to be, when he tells us, it is '*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*' Human testimony can go no farther than things seen, and visible to the senses. Divine and spiritual things are far above—and what says St. Paul?—'*For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God*

Fitzherbert has put off his coming here till August. My dear Miss is very well. She bids me send you her love, and tell you, she must consider some time about writing to you before she can execute properly.

Do not treat me with so much deference. I have no claim to it; and, from a friend, it looks too like ceremony—a thing I am at this time more particularly embarrassed with. Perhaps you never knew a person less apt to take offence than myself; and if it was otherwise in general, I am sure you would not have cause to apprehend the giving it, but would always be a particular exception to my taking it.

See how far the pleasure of conversing with you has overcome my present dislike to writing; and let it be a farther proof to you of my being,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend, and obliged humble servant,

H. BOOTHBY.[1]

How does Miss Williams and her father? My regards to her."

LETTER XXIV.

"Tissington, July 29, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

As it happened, your rebuke for my silence was so timed as to give me pleasure. Your complaints would have been very painful to me, had I not been pretty certain that before I read them you would receive a letter, which would take away all cause for them. I could not have borne them under the least consciousness of having merited them. But, quite free from this, such marks of your friendship were very pleasing. *You* need not make use of any arguments to persuade me of the necessity of frequent writing; I am very willing to acknowledge it in a correspondence with you; though I never so little liked to write, in general, since I could write, as for some time past. Both my mind and body are much indisposed to this employment. The last is not so easy in the posture which habit has fixed, when I write, and consequently the mind affected too. To you I always wish to appear in the best light; but you will excuse infirmities; and to purchase your letters I shall think my time happily bestowed. If but one line can

[1] At the end of this letter Dr. Johnson wrote, *Answered.*

give you pleasure or suspend pain, I shall rejoice. How kind was your last little letter! I longed to return my immediate thanks: but Mr. Fitzherbert's mother, an old lady, bigoted to forms, prevented me; and has prevented me till now. She came here, is here, and stays some time. I continue much better in my health, thank God, alert and cheerful; and have stood storms and tempests, rain and cold, unhurt. I observe the good Doctor's rules, and have found them efficacious. Mr. Fitzherbert had appointed his time for being here as next week, but has changed it to near three weeks hence. Tell me some literary news—I mean, of your own; for I am very indifferent to the productions of others, but interested warmly in all yours, both in heart and mind.

I hope our difference is only in words, or that in time our sentiments will be so much the same, as to make our expressions clear and plain. As you say, every moment brings the time nearer in which we must think alike. O may this time (or rather end of time to us) which will fully disclose truth, also with it disclose eternal happiness to us! You see, I cannot help praying for you, nor shall I ever, as I am, truly,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

My little flock all well; Miss much at your service, and has a high regard for you. If you mention me at the Doctor's, mention me as

me. But my dear children are all well; and some sunshine will revive me again. This is only to let you see I think of you, and, as I ought, receive every instance of your regard, when I assure you it increases mine, and makes me more and more,

Dear Sir,

Your grateful and affectionate friend,

H. Boothby.

I will tell you some time what I think of Anacreon."

LETTER XXVI.

"August 13, 1755.

Dear Sir,

You was at Oxford then?—And I was vain enough to conclude you was not in town, or I should have heard from you sooner, and you have not lessened my vanity by thinking of and writing to *me*, in a place where so many objects suited to your taste would be courting your attention—so many of the learned seeking your conversation. This is a new obligation, of which I am very sensible. Yet I had rather seen a letter, dated from Lichfield, because then I should have hoped soon to see Mr. Johnson himself, and for an opportunity of conversing with him.

I am at present preparing to receive Mr. Fitzherbert, Mr. and Mrs. Alleyne, Mr. Gernier, &c. If you have been in town this week, probably you have seen Mr. Fitzherbert. I hope he would not neglect to inquire after the most valuable acquaintance he has there. Our scene here will be much changed. But all is, and ought to be, variable in this life; and I expect the change with much inward tranquillity. The interval of rest and quiet I have had, has greatly contributed to the amendment of my health. I walked a mile yesterday, without great fatigue; and hope I shall be able to support the labours to come. I am not careful, however, for the morrow. That is in the hands of the almighty and all-merciful God. There I trust; and pray—Give me *this* day my daily bread.

Miss is still *tuning*—no wonder that you have inspired *her* with awe. She is disturbed she does not write; yet cannot satisfy herself with any mental composition. She has yet been working for you. I leave her to herself, and hope she will produce something.

Remember that, the more people I see, the more I shall rejoice in

a letter from you. Turtle-feasts, and venison-feasts, I delight not in. Treat me sometimes, as often as you can, with what will be really a feast; and in the best manner I am able I will thank you, and be ever, as now,

Dear Sir,

Your grateful and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XXVII.

"Tissington, August 20, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

Everywhere I find myself in your thoughts—at Oxford—in town. How shall I reward this kind attention to a friend, this tender solicitude for her health and welfare? Your partiality will, I know, make you reply, 'by neglecting no means to procure and preserve them.' This is what I am sensible I owe to the most inconsiderable creature whom it pleases a good Providence to benefit in the last degree by me; and much more to a friend. Pain and sickness do most certainly produce the consequences you observe; and often do I reflect with the greatest wonder and gratitude on all those various occasions in which it has pleased God to visit me with these, that he should never leave me without that *medicine of life—a friend.*

I am glad you saw Mr. Fitzherbert, and that he repeated his invi-

there is no avoiding these sometimes. But I have respite seasonably, thank God, as now. And next week Mr. Fitzherbert and his guests go to dance at Buxton, and see the Peak. You will perhaps think a tour round the Peak would be no bad thing for me; and I should think so too, but as this will be ordered, or *disordered*, by the uncertainty and irregularity of the directors, it will be a rash attempt for me, and, besides, they have only vehicles sufficient for themselves; so that I shall have another resting time, before they return again to stay a few days; and then they all go to Lichfield race, from whence Mr. Fitzherbert and Gernier only return back. Now, I have not only told you the state of my health, but of affairs here, that you may know both how I do, and what I do.

And, while I am writing all this, I really feel ashamed; conscious how little I merit to be thought of consequence enough for any body to desire such information concerning me, particularly you, who I am persuaded, might select a friend among the most worthy. Do not call this feigned humility, or, in other words, the worst sort of pride. 'Tis truth, I assure you.

Will you come into Derbyshire? But why do I ask? You say you will. In the mean time, I will endeavour, with God's blessing, to lay in a stock of health, that I may have the pleasure of walking with you in Dovedale, and many other pleasures I hope for.

You desire longer letters; here you have one—but such a one as I am afraid will not make you repeat that desire. However, it will be a proof of my willingness to gratify your request whenever it is in my power, and that I never say little to Mr. Johnson by choice, but when I can hear him talk.

The least degree of your quiet is a treasure which I shall take the utmost care of—but yet, from very certain experience, and the truest regard to your peace, I must advise to take it out of all human hands. Young's experience strongly speaks with mine—

> 'Lean not on Earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
> A broken reed, at best; but oft a spear;
> On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.'

Yet such has been the amazing mercy of God to me, that now I can say—'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' Looking over some old papers lately, I found two lines I had scratched out, which were prophetic of what has since happened to me—

> 'Variety of pain *will* make me know,
> That greatest bliss is drawn from greatest woe.'—

But this, perhaps, you say, is far from being a dissuasive. Why, as to the event here, 'tis indeed the contrary. But, in general, the disappointment and pain is certain, the event not so. There is no peace but that ONE, which the Prince of Peace, king of *Salem*, left to his disciples—'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' No—for in another place, our Saviour says—'In the world ye shall have tribulation'—Seek, and you will surely find. You do me the honour to *call* me your *monitress;* and you see I endeavour to execute the duty of one. Peace and happiness here and for ever, do I most ardently wish you; as I am truly,

Dear Sir,

Your greatly obliged and affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Miss's love.

N.B. I intended to have concluded this, where I talked of a longer letter on the other side, but went on imperceptibly as it were. Remember you are a whole sheet in my debt after you receive this."

LETTER XXVIII.

"September 8, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

It is as impossible for me to forbear writing, as it is to say a

biassed criticism; were it publicly to pronounce me superior to all the Arinda's, Sevigné's, &c. in epistolary excellence.

I have been fourteen miles to-day, was out by eight in the morning, (some hours before your day begins), dispatched several important things, am tired, but could not suffer another post to go without an assurance that I am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend, and obliged one too,

H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XXIX.

"Tissington, Sept. 20, 1755.

DEAR SIR,

Were I at liberty, it would not be in my power to enhance the value of my letters by their scarcity. You should have them, till you cried out 'Hold your hand.' But you cannot imagine the half of what I have to do; and I assure you, I have on your account put off writing to others from time to time, till now I am ashamed. Be silent at Dr. Lawrence's as to me, for I have been long in debt there: I intended to have paid to-day, but you won't let me. This way I consider—'I must go to Derby on Monday, to stay some days—no writing then—and, therefore, I must write to Mr. Johnson now, and defer the rest—why I *must* write to Mr. Johnson, rather than to others, he may find out.'—

You do not pity me, when I am whirled round by a succession of company; yet you are anxious for my health. Now this is, though perhaps unknown to you, really a contradiction. For one day's crowd, with the preceding necessary preparations to receive them, the *honours*, as it is called, of a large table, with the noise, &c. attending, pulls down my feeble frame more than any thing you can imagine. To that, air, gentle exercise, and then quiet and rest, are most friendly. You have often declared you cannot be alone; and I, as often, that I could not *be* long, unless I was some hours in every day alone. I have found myself mistaken; for yet I am in being, though for some time past I have seldom had one half hour in a day to myself; and I have learned this profitable lesson, that resignation is better than indulgence; and, time is too precious a thing for me to have at my own disposal. Providence has given it to others, and, if it may profit them, I shall rejoice. It is all I desire.

I can only be sorry that the text in the Corinthians does not prove to you what I would have it, and add to my prayers for you that it may prove it.

Miss Fitzherbert is very well, and all my dear flock. She sends love to you.

You will prolong your visit to this part of the world, till some of us are so tired of it that we shall be moving towards you. Consider, it is almost October. When do you publish? Any news relating to you will be acceptable; if it is good, I shall rejoice; if not, hope to lessen any pain it may give you by the sharing it, as,

Dear Sir,

Your truly affectionate friend,

H. Boothby."

LETTER XXX.

"Ossington, October 11, 1755.

Dear Sir,

I have been so great a rambler lately, that I have not had time to write. A week at Derby; another between Stafford and some other relations. The hurrying about proved too much for my strength, and disordered me a good deal; but now, thank God, I am better again. Your letter I met here, as I always do every one you write, with much pleasure. I expected this pleasure; and as I should have met dis-

[redacted]

you? No—you know I shall; and, unless duty c
wish rather to have that visit deferred, till it may
tunity of seeing you here on our return in the Sum...
this, and contrive so, if possible, as that both in Su
I may have the pleasure of your conversation;
cheer the gloom of one season, and add to the s
Such influence has *such* a friend on,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and affectionate hu

My dear Miss Fitzherbert is well, very well, and has nev
me one alarm since we came here. She sends you her love
sincerely."

LETTER XXXI.

"Sunday Night.[1]

MY DEAR SIR,

I am in trouble about you; and the more, as I am not able to see how you do myself—pray send me word. You have my sincere prayers; and the first moment I can, you shall see,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

I beg you would be governed by the good Doctor while you are sick; when you are well, do as you please."

LETTER XXXII.

MY DEAR SIR,[2]

Would I was able to reply fully to both your kind letters! but at present I am not. I trust we shall both be better soon, with a blessing upon our good Doctor's means. I have been, as he can tell

[1] In Dr. Johnson's hand-writing, "December, 1755."

[2] In Dr. Johnson's hand-writing, "December, 1755;" although it seems to be an answer to the next, written by him.

you, all obedience. As an answer to one part of your letter, I have sent you a little book. God bless you. I must defer the rest, till I am more able.

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

H. BOOTHBY.

Give Cooper some tickets.

I am glad you sent for the hock. Mr. Fitzherbert has named it more than once.

Thank you for saving me from what indeed might have greatly hurt me, had I heard or seen in a paper such a ———.

DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. BOOTHBY.

From Mrs. Piozzi's "Letters to and from Dr. Samuel Johnson," vol. ii., p. 393.

"December 30, 1755.

DEAR MADAM,

It is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to some sudden succession of cold to heat; such as in the

hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

Your billet brought me, what I much wished to have, a that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I desire it.

The Doctor is anxious about you. He thinks you too yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will as we have already exchanged injunctions. However, me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt you at all.

Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some w about me say I ought to accept it. I shall ther him if he will send me a bottle.

There has gone about a report that I died to-day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you; which, for me, is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes's argument, 'I think; therefore I am.' It is as good a consequence, 'I write; therefore I am alive.' I might give another, 'I am alive; therefore I love Miss Boothby;' but that I hope our friendship may be of far longer duration than life.

I am,

Dearest Madam,

With sincere affection,

Yours, &c."

TO THE SAME.

"December 31.

MY SWEET ANGEL,

I have read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great improvement; whether you can read my notes, I know not. You ought not to be offended; I am perhaps as sincere as the writer. In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and should take or leave by your direction; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I desire however to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what was in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to show it you.

It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little

new, except new forms of expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines.

I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees it best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing temporal otherwise than conditionally. Dear Angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness.

It has pleased God to permit me to be much better; which I believe will please you.

Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red port, or to eat it first, and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off.

I would not have you offer it to the Doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders; yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a day, will be sufficient to begin: or less, if you find any aversion. I think using

TO THE SAME.

"Saturday.

DEAREST DEAR,

I am extremely obliged to you for the kir of your in-
quiry. After I had written to you, Dr. Lawrence came d would
have given some oil and sugar, but I took rhenish a
recovered my voice. I yet cough much, and sle
visited by another Doctor to-day; but I laughed at his u
I fasted on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and
hunger nor faintness. I have dined yesterday and to-day, and
little refreshment. I am not much amiss; but can no more s p
than if my dearest lady were angry at,

Madam,
Your, &c."

TO THE SAME.

"January 8, 1756.

HONOURED MADAM,

I beg of you to endeavour to live. I have returned your *Law;* which, however, I earnestly entreat you to give me. I am in great trouble; if you can write three words to me, be pleased to do it. I am afraid to say much, and cannot say nothing when my dearest is in danger.

The all-merciful God have mercy on you!

I am, Madam,
Your, &c."

[Miss Boothby died January 16, 1756; upon whose death Dr. Johnson composed the following prayer. "Prayers and Meditations," &c. p. 25.]

HILL BOOTHBY'S Death, Jan. 1756.

O Lord God, Almighty disposer of all things, in whose hands are life and death, who givest comforts and takest them away, I return thee thanks for the good example of Hill Boothby, whom thou hast now taken away; and implore thy grace, that I may improve the opportunity of instruction which thou hast afforded me, by the knowledge of her life, and by the sense of her death; that I may consider the uncertainty of my present state, and apply myself earnestly to the

duties which thou hast set before me, that, living in thy fear, I ma
die in thy favour, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I commend, &c. W. and H. B.

[Transcribed June 26, 1768.]

The following Epitaph, upon Miss Hill Boothby, was written by the present Sir Brooke Boothby.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

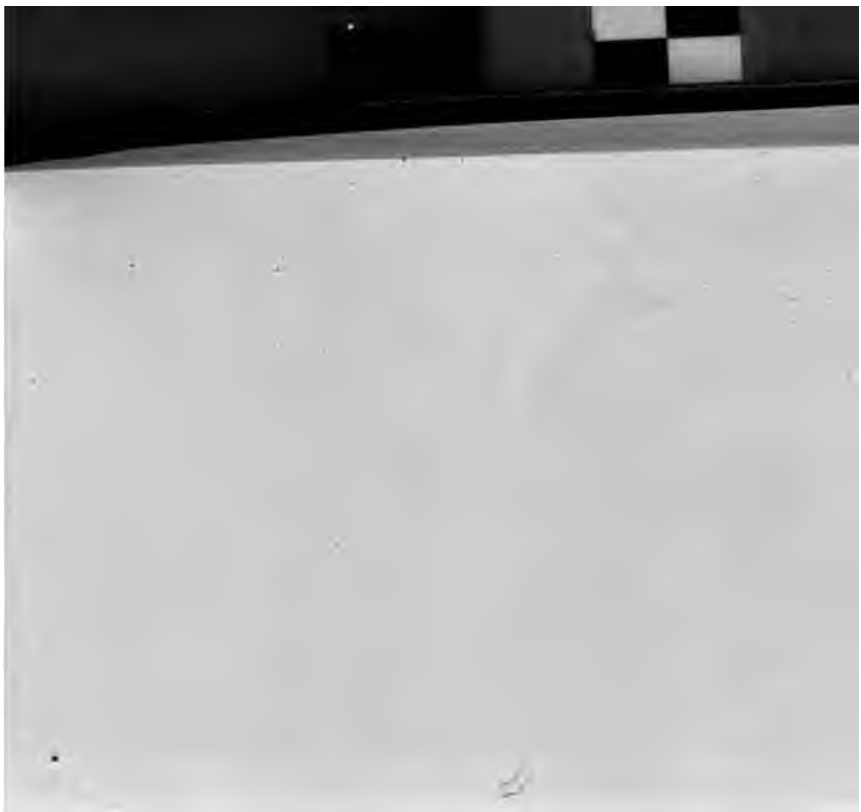
OF

HILL BOOTHBY,

Only Daughter of BROOKE BOOTHBY and ELIZABETH FITZHERBERT,

Born Oct. 27, 1708; *died Jan.* 16, 1756.

COULD beauty, learning, talents, virtue, save
From the dark confines of th' insatiate grave,
This frail memorial had not ask'd a tear,
O'er Hill's cold relics, sadly mouldering here.
Friendship's chaste flame her ardent bosom fir'd,
And bright Religion's all her soul inspir'd;
Her soul, too heavenly for an house of clay,
Soon wore its earth-built fabrick to decay;
In the last struggles of departing breath,



A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.



A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

BY THOMAS TYERS.[1]

WHEN Charles the Second was informed of the death of Cowley, he pronounced, "that he had not left a better man behind him in England." It may be affirmed with truth, that this was the case when Dr. Johnson breathed his last. Those who observed his declining state of health during the last winter, and heard his complaints, of painful days and sleepless nights, for which he took large quantities of opium, had no reason to expect that he could survive another season of frost and snow. His constitution was totally broken, and no art of the physician or surgeon could protract his existence beyond the 13th of December. When he was opened, one of his

those of Jenkins and Parr! But perhaps Johnson had more of life, by his intenseness of living. Most people die of disease. He was all his life preparing himself for death: but particularly in the last stage of his asthma and dropsy. "Take care of your soul—don't live such a life as I have done—don't let your business or dissipation make you neglect your sabbath"—were now his constant inculcations. Private and publick prayer, when his visitors were his audience, were his constant exercises. He cannot be said to have been weary of the weight of existence, for he declared, that to prolong it only for one year, but not for the comfortless sensations he had lately felt, he would suffer the amputation of a limb. He was willing to endure positive pain for possible pleasure. But he had no expectation that nature could last much longer. And therefore, for his last week, he undoubtedly abandoned every hope of his recovery or duration, and committed his soul to God. Whether he felt the instant stroke of death, and met the king of terrors face to face, cannot be known: for "death and the sun cannot be looked upon," says Rochefoucault. But the writer of this has reason to imagine that when he thought he had made his peace with his Maker, he had nothing to fear. He has talked of submitting to a violent death, in a good cause, without apprehensions. On one of the last visits from his surgeon, who on performing the puncture on his legs, had assured him that he was better, he declared, "he felt himself not so, and that he did not desire to be treated like a woman or a child, for that he had made up his mind." He had travelled through the vale of this world for more than seventy-five years. It probably was a wilderness to him for more than half his time. But he was in the possession of rest and comfort and plenty, for the last twenty years. Yet the blessings of fortune and reputation could not compensate to him the want of health, which pursued him through his pilgrimage on earth. *Post equitem sedet atra cura.*

> "For when we mount the flying steed,
> Sits gloomy Care behind."

Of the hundred sublunary things bestowed on mortals, health is ninety-nine. He was born with a scrophulous habit, for which he was touched, as he acknowledged, by good Queen Anne, whose piece of gold he carefully preserved. But even a Stuart could not expell that enemy to his frame, by a touch. For it would have been even beyond the stroking power of Greatrix in all his glory, to charm it away. Though he seemed to be athletic as Milo himself, and in his younger days performed several feats of activity, he was to the last a *convul-*

sionary. He has often stept aside, to let nature do what she would with him. His gestures, which were a degree of St. Vitus's dance, in the street, attracted the notice of many: the stare of the vulgar, but the compassion of the better sort. This writer has often looked another way, as the companions of Peter the Great were used to do, while he was under the short paroxysm. He was perpetually taking opening medicines. He could only keep his ailments from gaining ground. He thought he was worse for the agitation of active exercise. He was afraid of his disorder's seizing his head, and took all possible care that his understanding should not be deranged. *Orandum est, ut sit mens sana in corpore sano.* When his knowledge from books, and he knew all that books could tell him, is considered; when his compositions in verse and prose are enumerated to the reader (and a complete list of them wherever dispersed is desirable) it must appear extraordinary he could abstract himself so much from his feelings, and that he could pursue with ardour the plan he laid down of establishing a great reputation. Accumulating learning (and the example of Barretier, whose life he wrote) shewed him how to arrive at all science. His imagination often appeared to be too mighty for the control of his reason. In the preface to his Dictionary, he says, that his work was composed "amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow." "I never read this preface," says Mr. Horne, "but it makes me shed tears."

If this memoir-writer possessed the pen of a Plutarch, and the subject is worthy of that great biographer, he would begin his account

of the lectures, for which when he was reprimanded and interr
he replied with great rudeness and contempt of the lecturer.
he displayed an overbearing disposition that would not br
trol, and shewed that, like Cæsar, he was fitter to comm
obey. This dictatorial spirit was the leading feature
ment to his contemporaries. His college themes
are still remembered; and his elegant translation of
into Latin verse found its way into a volume of poems
one Husbands. In 1735, after having been some ti
Anthony Blackwall, his friends assisted him to set up
Lichfield. Here he formed an acquaintance with
Green, then an usher at Lichfield, and with Mr. Ha·
As the school probably did not answer his expectatio
not grow tired of teaching others, especially if he wa to
self?), he resolved to come up to London, where everything
had for wit and for money (*Romæ omnia venalia*), and to seek his
fortune. He was accompanied by his pupil Mr. Garrick: and
travelled on horseback to the metropolis in March, 1737.

The time and business of this journey are before the public in some letters from Mr. Walmsley, who recommends Johnson as a writer of tragedy; as a translator from the French language; and as a good scholar. He brought with him his tragedy of "Irene," which afterwards took its chance on Drury-Lane theatre. Luckily he did not throw it into the fire, by design or otherwise, as Parson Adams did his "Æschylus" by mistake. He offered himself for the service of the booksellers; "for he was born for nothing but to write,"—

> "And from the jest obscene reclaim our youth,
> And set our passions on the side of truth."

The hurry of this pen prevents the recollection of his first performances. But he used to call Dodsley his *patron*, because he made him, if not first, yet best known by printing and publishing, upon his own judgement, his Satire, called "London," which was an imitation of one of Juvenal, whose gravity and severity of expression he possessed. He there and then discovered how able he was "to catch the manners living as they rise." The poem had a great sale, was applauded by the public, and praised by Mr. Pope, who, not being able to discover the author, said "he will soon be *deterré*." In 1738 he luckily fell into the hands of his other early patron, Cave. His speeches for the Senate of Lilliput were begun in 1740, and continued for several sessions. They passed for original with many till very

lately. But Johnson, who detested all injurious imposition, took a great deal of pains to acknowledge the innocent deception. He gave Smollett notice of their unoriginality, while he was going over his historical ground, and to be upon his guard in quoting from the Lilliput Debates. It is within recollection, that an animated speech he put into the mouth of Pitt, in answer to the parliamentary veteran Horace Walpole, was much talked of, and considered as genuine. Members of parliament acknowledge, that they reckon themselves much obliged for the printed accounts of debates of both Houses, because they are made to speak better than they do in the Senate. Within these few years, a gentleman in a high employment under government was at breakfast in Gray's-Inn, where Johnson was present, and was commending the excellent preservation of the speeches of both houses, in the Lilliput Debates. He declared, he knew how to appropriate every speech without a signature; for that every person spoke in character, and was as certainly and as easily known as a speaker in Homer or in Shakspeare. "Very likely, Sir," said Johnson, ashamed of having deceived him, "but I wrote them in the garret where I then lived." His predecessor in this oratorical fabrication was Guthrie; his successor in the Magazine was Hawkesworth. It is said, that to prove himself equal to this employment (but there is not leisure for the adjustment of chronology) in the judgment of Cave, he undertook the "Life of Savage," which he asserted (not incredible of him), and valued himself upon it, that he wrote in six and thirty hours. In one night he also composed, after finishing an evening in

as to its culinary one; and it is observable, that the dish or the book that palls at one time is a banquet at another. By his innumerable quotations you would suppose, with a great personage, that he must have read more books than any man in England, and have been a mere book-worm: but he acknowledged that supposition was a mistake in his favour. He owned he had hardly ever read a book through. The posthumous volumes of Mr. Harris of Salisbury (which treated of subjects that were congenial with his own professional studies) had attractions that engaged him to the end. Churchill used to say, having heard perhaps of his confession, as a boast, that "if Johnson had only read a few books, he could not be the author of his own works." His opinion, however, was, that he who reads most, has the chance of knowing most; but he declared, that the perpetual task of reading was as bad as the slavery in the mine, or the labour at the oar. He did not always give his opinion unconditionally of the pieces he had even perused, and was competent to decide upon. He did not choose to have his sentiments generally known; for there was a great eagerness, especially in those who had not the pole-star of judgment to direct them, to be taught what to think or to say on literary performances. "What does Johnson say of such a book?" was the question of every day. Besides, he did not want to increase the number of his enemies, which his decisions and criticisms had created him; for he was generally willing to retain his friends, to whom, and their works, he bestowed sometimes too much praise, and recommended beyond their worth, or perhaps his own esteem. But affection knows no bounds. Shall this pen find a place in the present page to mention, that a shameless Aristophanes had an intention of taking him off upon the stage, as the "Rehearsal" does the great Dryden? When it came to the notice of our exasperated man of learning, he conveyed such threats of vengeance and personal punishment to the mimic, that he was glad to proceed no farther. The reverence of the public for his character afterwards, which was increasing every year, would not have suffered him to be the object of theatrical ridicule. Like Fame in Virgil, *vires acquirit eundo*. In the year 1738 he wrote the "Life of Father Paul," and published proposals for a translation of his "History of the Council of Trent," by subscription: but it did not go on. Mr. Urban even yet hopes to recover some sheets of this translation, that were in a box under St. John's Gate; more certainly once placed there, than Rowley's Poems were in the chest in a tower of the church of Bristol.

Night was his time for composition. Indeed he literally turned night into day, *noctes vigilabat ad ipsum mane*; but not like Tigellius in Horace. Perhaps he never was a good sleeper, and (while all the rest of the world was in bed) he chose his lamp, in the words of Milton,

"at midnight hour,
Were seen in some high lonely tower."

He wrote and lived perhaps at one time only from day to day, and (according to vulgar expression) from sheet to sheet. Dr. Cheyne reprobates the practice of turning night into day, as pernicious to mind and body. Jortin has something to say on the vigils of a learned man, in his "Life of Erasmus." "As he would not sleep when he could, nothing but opium could procure him repose." There is cause to believe, he would not have written unless under the pressure of necessity. *Magister artis ingenique largitor venter*, says Persius. He wrote to live, and luckily for mankind lived a great many years to write. All his pieces are promised for a new edition of his works under the inspection of Sir John Hawkins, one of his executors, who has undertaken to be his biographer. Johnson's high tory principles in church and state were well known. But neither his "Prophecy of the Hanover Horse," lately maliciously reprinted, nor his political principles or conversations, got him into any personal difficulties, nor prevented the offer of a pension, nor his acceptance. *Rara temporum felicitas, ubi sentire quæ velis, et quæ sentias dicere licet.* The present royal family are winning the hearts of all the friends of the

Dictionary a word must be said; but there is not room for much. The delineation of his plan, which was esteemed a beautiful composition, was inscribed to Lord Chesterfield, no doubt with permission, whilst he was secretary of state. It was at this time, he said, he aimed at elegance of writing, and set for his emulation the Preface of Chambers to his "Cyclopedia." Johnson undoubtedly expected beneficial patronage. It should seem that he was in the acquaintance of his Lordship, and that he had dined at his table, by an allusion to him in a letter to his son, printed by Mrs. Stanhope, and which he himself would have been afraid to publish. Whilst he was ineffectually hallooing the Graces in the ear of his son, he set before him the slovenly behaviour of our author at his table, whom he acknowledges as a great genius, but points him out as a rock to avoid, and considers him only as "a respectable Hottentot." When the book came out, Johnson took his revenge, by saying of it, "that the instructions to his son inculcated the manners of a dancing master, and the morals of a prostitute." Within this year or two he observed (for anger is a short-lived passion), that, bating some improprieties, it contained good directions, and was not a bad system of education. But Johnson probably did not think so highly of his own appearance as of his morals. For, on being asked if Mr. Spence had not paid him a visit? "Yes," says he, "and he probably may think he visited a bear." "Johnson," says the author of the "Life of Socrates," "is a literary savage." "Very likely," replied Johnson; "and Cooper (who was as thick as long) is a literary Punchinello."

It does not appear that Lord Chesterfield showed any substantial proofs of approbation to our Philologer, for that was the professional title he chose. A small present he would have disdained. Johnson was not of a temper to put up with the affront of disappointment. He revenged himself in a letter to his Lordship, written with great acrimony, and renouncing all acceptance of favour. It was handed about, and probably will be published, for *litera scripta manet*. He used to say, "he was mistaken in his choice of a patron, for he had simply been endeavouring to gild a rotten post."

Lord Chesterfield indeed commends and recommends Mr. Johnson's Dictionary in two or three numbers of the "World." Not words alone pleased him. "When I had undergone," says the compiler, "a long and fatiguing voyage, and was just getting into port, this Lord sent out a small cock-boat to pilot me in." The agreement for this great work was for fifteen hundred pounds. This was a large bookseller's venture at that time: and it is in many shares.

Robertson, Gibbon, and a few more, have raised the price of manuscript copies. In the course of fifteen years, two and twenty thousand pounds have been paid to four authors. Johnson's world of words demands frequent editions. His titles of Doctor of Laws from Dublin and from Oxford (both of which came to him unasked and unknown, and only not unmerited); his pension from the King, which is to be considered as a reward for his pioneering services in the English language, and by no means as a bribe; gave him consequence, and made the Dictionary and its author more extensively known. It is a royal satisfaction to have made the life of a learned man more comfortable to him.

"These are imperial works, and worthy Kings."

Lord Corke, who would have been kinder to him than Stanhope (if he could) as soon as it came out, presented the Dictionary to the Academy della Crusca at Florence in 1755. Even for the abridgment in octavo, which puts it into every body's hands, he was paid to his satisfaction, by the liberality of his booksellers. His reputation is as great for compiling, digesting, and ascertaining the English language, as if he had invented it. His Grammar in the beginning of the work was the best in our language, in the opinion of Goldsmith. During the printing of his Dictionary, the "Ramblers" came out periodically; for he could do more than one thing at a time. He declared that he wrote them by way of relief from his application to his Dictionary, and for the reward. He has told this writer, that he had no

last work, that there is not a hard word in it, yet he does not rattle through hard words and stalk through polysyllables, to use an expression of Addison, as in his earlier productions. His style, as he says of Pope, became smoothed by the scythe, and levelled by the roller. It pleased him to be told by Dr. Robertson, that he had read his Dictionary twice over. If he had some enemies beyond and even on this side of the Tweed, he had more friends. Only he preferred England to Scotland. As it is cowardly to insult a dead lion, it is hoped, that as death extinguishes envy, it also does ill-will: "for British vengeance wars not with the dead."

He gave himself very much to companionable friends for the last years of his life (for he was delivered from the daily labour of the pen, and he wanted relaxation), and they were eager for the advantage and reputation of his conversation. Therefore he frequently left his own home (for his household gods were not numerous or splendid enough for the reception of his great acquaintance), and visited them both in town and country. This was particularly the case with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale (*ex uno disce omnes*), who were the most obliging and obliged of all within his intimacy, and to whom he was introduced by his friend Murphy. He lived with them a great part of every year. He formed at Streatham a room for a library, and increased by his recommendation the number of books. Here he was to be found (himself a library) when a friend called upon him; and by him the friend was sure to be introduced to the dinner-table, which Mrs. Thrale knew how to spread with the utmost plenty and elegance; and which was often adorned with such guests, that to dine there was, *epulis accumbere divum*. Of Mrs. Thrale, if mentioned at all, less cannot be said, than that in one of the latest opinions of Johnson, "if she was not the wisest woman in the world, she was undoubtedly one of the wittiest." She took or caused such care to be taken of him, during an illness of continuance, that Goldsmith told her, "he owed his recovery to her attention." She taught him to lay up something of his income every year. Besides a natural vivacity in conversation, she had reading enough, and the gods had made her poetical. "The Three Warnings" (the subject she owned not to be original) are highly interesting and serious, and literally come home to every body's breast and bosom. The writer of this would not be sorry if this mention could follow the lady to Venice. At Streatham, where our Philologer was also guide, philosopher, and friend, he passed much time. His inclinations here were consulted, and his will was a law. With this family he made excursions into Wales and to Brighthelmstone. Change of

air and of place were grateful to him, for he loved vicissitude. But he could not long endure the illiteracy and rusticity of the country, for woods and groves, and hill and dale, were not his scenes:

> "Tower'd cities please us then,
> And the busy hum of men."

But the greatest honour of his life was from a visit that he received from a Great Personage in the Library of the Queen's palace—only it was not from a King of his own making. Johnson on his return repeated the conversation, which was much to the honour of the great person, and was as well supported as Lewis the XIVth could have continued with Voltaire. He said, he only wanted to be more known, to be more loved. They parted, much pleased with each other. If it is not an impertinent stroke of this pen, it were to be wished that one more person had conveyed an enquiry about him during his last illness. "Every body has left their names, or wanted to know how I do," says he, "but "—— In his younger days he had a great many enemies, of whom he was not afraid.

> "Ask you what provocation I have had?
> The strong antipathy of good to bad."

Churchill, the puissant satirist, challenged Johnson to combat: Satire the weapon. Johnson never took up the gauntlet or replied, for he thought it unbecoming him to defend himself against an author who might be resolved to have the last word. He was content to let

given to it by the last mentioned satirical poet, that it might have made him angry or odious, or both. Says Churchill, amongst other passages very entertaining to a neutral reader,

> "He damns the pension that he takes,
> And loves the Stuart he forsakes."

Not so fast, great satirist—for he had now no friends at Rome. In the sport of conversation, he would sometimes take the wrong side of a question, to try his hearers, or for his own exertions. But this may do mischief sometimes. "For," without aiming at ludicrous quotation, "he could dispute on both sides, and confute." Among those he could trust himself with, he would enter into imaginary combat with the whigs, and has now and then shook the principles of a sturdy revolutionist. All ingenious men can find arguments for and against every thing: and if their hearts are not good, they may do mischief with their heads. On all occasions he pressed his antagonist with so strong a front of argument, that he generally prevented his retreat. "Every body," said an eminent detector of impostors, "must be cautious how they enter the lists with Dr. Johnson." He wrote many political tracts since his pension. Perhaps he would not have written at all, unless impelled by gratitude. But he wrote his genuine thoughts, and imagined himself contending on the right side. A great parliamentary character seems to resolve all his American notions into the vain expectation of rocking a man in the cradle of a child. Johnson recounted the number of his opponents with indifference. He wrote for that government which had been generous to him. He was too proud to call upon Lord Bute, or leave his name at his house, though he was told it would be agreeable to his Lordship, for he said he had performed the greater difficulty, for he had taken the pension.

The last popular work, to him an easy and a pleasing one, was the writing the lives of our poets, now reprinted in four octavo volumes. He finished this business so much to the satisfaction of the booksellers that they presented him a gratuity of one hundred pounds, having paid him three hundred pounds as his price. The Knaptons made Tindal a large present on the success of his translation of Rapin's history. But an unwritten space must be found for what Johnson did respecting Shakspeare. For the writer and reader observe a disorder of time in this page. He took so many years to publish his edition, that his subscribers grew displeased and clamorous for their books, which he might have prevented. For he was

able to do a great deal in a little time. Though for collation he was not fit. He could not pore long on a text. It was Columbus at the oar. It was on most literary points difficult to get himself into a willingness to work. He was idle, or unwell, or loth to act upon compulsion. But at last he tried to awake his faculties, and, like the lethargic porter of the castle of Indolence, "to rouse himself as much, as rouse himself he can." He confessed that the publication of his Shakspeare answered to him in every respect. He had a very large subscription.

Dr. Campbell, then alive in Queen-square, who had a volume in his hand, pronounced, that the preface and notes were worth the whole subscription money. You would think the text not approved or adjusted by the past or present editions, and requiring to be settled by the future. It is hoped that the next editors will have read all the books that Shakspeare read: a promise our Johnson gave, but was not able to perform.

The reader is apprized, that this memoir is only a sketch of life, manner, and writings—

> "In every work regard the writer's end;
> For none can compass more than they intend."

It looks forwards and backwards almost at the same time. Like the nightingale in Strada, "it hits imperfect accents here and there." Hawkesworth, one of the Johnsonian school, upon being asked, whether Johnson was a happy man, by a gentleman who had been just introduced to him, and wanted to know every thing about him, confessed, that he looked upon him as a most miserable being. The moment of enquiry was probably about the time he lost his wife, and sent for Hawkesworth, in the most earnest manner, to come and give him consolation and his company.——"And skreen me from the ills of life!" is the conclusion of his sombrous poem on November. In happier moments (for who is not subject to every skyey influence, and the evil of the hour?) he would argue, and prove it in a sort of disserta on, that there was, generally and individually, more of natural and moral good, than of the contrary. He asserted, that no man could pronounce he did not feel more pleasure than misery. Every body would not answer in the affirmative; for an ounce of pain outweighs a pound of pleasure. There are people who wish they had never been born—to whom life is a disease—and whose apprehensions of dying pains and of futurity embitter every thing. The reader must not think it impertinent to remark, that Johnson did not choose

to pass his whole life in celibacy. Perhaps the raising
may be a debt and duty all men owe to those who hav
them. Johnson had a daughter, who died before its m
pen is not mistaken. When these were gone, he lost hi
for he never married again. He has expressed a s
Isaac Newton continued totally unacquainted wit
which is asserted by Voltaire, from the information o
is admitted to be true. For curiosity, the first and
the passions, might have led him to overcome th
This pen may as well finish this last point in the word
that Sir Isaac never was married, and perhaps never h
of it. Whether the sun-shine of the world upon our
drooping spirits, or that the lenient hand of time rem
from him, or that his health meliorated by mingling
croud of mankind, or not, he however apparentl
chearfulness, and became more fit for the labours o
rary function. But he certainly did not comm
intruder every uneasy sensation of mind and body.
asked, can determine of the pleasure and pain of others?

red mor
d his lite-
to every
it may be
True and

solemn are the lines of Prior, in his "Solomon:"

> "Who breathes must suffer, and who thinks must mourn;
> And he alone is blest, who ne'er was born."

Johnson thought he had no right to complain of his lot in life, or of having been disappointed: the world had not used him ill: it had not broke its word with him: it had promised him nothing: he aspired to no elevation: he had fallen from no height. Lord Gower endeavoured to obtain for him, by the interest of Swift, the mastership of a grammar-school of small income, for which Johnson was not qualified by the statutes to become a candidate. His lordship's letter, published some years ago, is to the honour of the subject: in praise of his abilities and integrity, and in commiseration of his distressed situation. Johnson wished, for a moment, to fill the chair of a professor, at Oxford, then become vacant, but he never applied for it. He was offered a good living, by Mr. Langton, if he would accept it, and take orders: but he chose not to put off his lay habit. He would have made an admirable library-keeper: like Casaubon, Magliabechi, or Bentley. But he belonged to the world at large. Talking on the topic of what his inclinations or faculties might have led him to have been, had he been bred to the profession of the law, he has said he should have wished for the Office of Master of the Rolls. He gave

into this vein in table-talk, partly serious and partly jocose, for it was only a manner he had of describing himself to his friends without vanity of his parts (for he was above being vain) or envy of the honourable stations engaged by other men of merit. He would correct any compositions of his friends (*habes confitentem*), and dictate on any subject on which they wanted information. He could have been an orator, if he would. On account of his intimacy with Dr. Dodd, for whom he made a bargain with the booksellers for his edition of the Bible, he wrote a petition to the Crown for mercy, after his condemnation. The letter he composed for the translator of Ariosto, that was sent to Mr. Hastings in Bengal, is esteemed a master-piece. Dr. Warton, of Winchester, talked of it as the very best he ever read. He could have been eminent, if he chose it, in letter-writing; a faculty in which, according to Sprat, his Cowley excelled. His epistolary and confidential correspondence would make an agreeable publication, but the world will never be trusted with it. He wrote as well in verse as in prose. Though he composed so harmoniously in Latin and English, he had no ear for music: and though he lived in such habits of intimacy with Sir Joshua Reynolds, and once intended to have written the lives of the painters, he had no eye, nor perhaps taste, for a picture, nor a landscape. He renewed his Greek some years ago, for which he found no occasion for twenty years. He owned that many knew more Greek than himself; but, that his grammar would show he had once taken pains. Sir William Jones, one of the most enlightened of the sons of men, as John-

not always good, understood he called him by the na
that eminent scholar, librarian of Manchester, and a N.....ror.
mistake was rather beneficial than otherwise to the perso r
Johnson had been much indisposed all that day, and r
he had just translated, during his affliction, into Lati an
not commit to paper. For so retentive was the mem L
that he could always recover whatever he lent to tha /. Sr
in return recited some of his own Latin compos
translated with success, and to Mr. Pope's *satisfac*
Ode. Come when you would, early or late, for ne
called from bed, when a visitor was at the door; ea-t
sure to be spread, *Te veniente die, Te decedente.*—V he c
himself in the morning, with tea he solaced himself me e
for in these, or in equivalent words, he exprest hims n a
letter to Jonas Hanway, who had just told the public that tea
ruin of the nation, and of the nerves of every one who drank it.
pun upon his favourite liquor he heard with a smile. Though
time seemed to be bespoke, and quite engrossed, it is certain his
house was open to all his acquaintance, new and old. His amanuensis
has given up his pen, the printer's devil has waited on the stairs for
a proof sheet, and the press has often stood still. His visitors were
delighted and instructed. No subject ever came amiss to him. He
could transfer his thoughts from one thing to another with the most
accommodating facility. He had the art, for which Locke was famous,
of leading people to talk on their favourite subjects, and on what they
knew best. By this he acquired a great deal of information. What
he once heard he rarely forgot. They gave him their best conversa-
tion, and he generally made them pleased with themselves, for
endeavouring to please him. Poet Smart used to relate, "that the
first conversation with him was of such variety and length, that it
began with poetry and ended at fluxions." He always talked as if he
was talking upon oath. He was the wisest person, and had the most
knowledge in ready cash, this writer had the honour to be acquainted
with—Here a little pause must be endured. The poor hand that
holds the pen is benumbed by the frost as much as by a torpedo. It
is cold within, by the fire-side, and a white world abroad. His reader
has a moment's leisure to censure or commend the harvest of anec-
dote that is brought in, for his sake; and if he has more reading than
usual, may remark for or against it in the manner of the Cardinal to
Ariosto; "All this may be true, extraordinary, and entertaining; but
where the deuce did you pick it all up?" The writer perhaps comes

[illegible] the proverbial observation, that the inquisitive person ends [illegible] the character of the teli-tale.—Johnson's advice was consi[illegible] on all occasions. He was known to be a good casuist, and therefore had many cases for his judgment. It is notorious, that some men had the wickedness to over-reach him, and to injure him, till they were found out. Lauder was of the number, who made, at the time, all the friends of Milton his enemies. There is nobody so likely to be imposed upon as a good man. His conversation, in the judgment of several, was thought to be equal to his correct writings. Perhaps the tongue will throw out more animated expressions than the pen. He said the most common things in the newest manner. He always commanded attention and regard. His person, though unadorned with dress, and even deformed by neglect, made you expect something, and you was hardly ever disappointed. His manner was interesting: the tone of his voice, and the sincerity of his expressions, even when they did not captivate your affections, or carry conviction, prevented contempt. It must be owned, his countenance, on some occasions, resembled too much the medallic likeness of Maglinbechi, as exhibited before the printed account of him by Mr. Spence. No man dared to take liberties with him, nor flatly contradict him; for he could repell any attack, having always about him the weapons of ridicule, of wit, and of argument. It must be owned, that some who had the desire to be admitted to him, thought him too dogmatical, and as exacting too much homage to his opinions, and came no more. For they said, while he presided in his circle, surrounded by his ad-

to say, "that 'Rasselas' was a lamp of wisdom." He there displays an uncommon capacity for remark, and makes the best use of the description of travellers. It is an excellent romance. But his journey into the Western Islands is an original thing. He hoped, as he said, when he came back, that no Scotchman had any right to be angry with what he wrote. It is a book written without the assistance of books. He said, "it was his wish and endeavour not to make a single quotation." His curiosity must have been excessive, and his strength undecayed, to accomplish a journey of such length, and subject to such inconvenience. His book was eagerly read. One of the first men of the age told Mr. Garrick, "that he would forgive Johnson all his wrong notions respecting America, on account of his writing that book." He thought himself the hardier for travelling. He took a tour into France, and meditated another into Italy or Portugal, for the sake of the climate. But Dr. Brocklesby, his friend and physician (and who that knows him can wish for more companionable and more professional knowledge?) conjured him, by every argument in his power, not to go abroad in the state of his health; but that if he was resolved on the first, and wished for something additional to his income, desired he would permit him to accommodate him out of his fortune with one hundred pounds a-year, during his travels, to be paid by instalments,

"Ye little stars hide your diminished heads."

The reply to this generosity was to this effect: "That he would not be obliged to any person's liberality, but to his King's." The continuance of this design to go abroad, occasioned the application for an increase of pension, that is so honourable to those who applied for it, and to the Lord Chancellor, who gave him leave to draw on his banker for any sum. With the courage of a man, Johnson demanded to know of Brocklesby, if his recovery was impossible? Being answered in the affirmative; "then," says he, "I will take no more opium, and give up my physicians."

At last he said, "if I am worse, I cannot go, if I am better I need not go, but if I continue neither better nor worse, I am as well where I am." The writer of this sketch, could wish to have committed to memory or paper all the wise and sensible things that dropped from his lips. If the one could have been Xenophon, the other was a Socrates.—His benevolence to mankind was known to all who knew him. Though so declared a friend to the Church of England and even a friend to the Convocation, it assuredly was not in his wish to

persecute for speculative notions. He used to say, he had no quarrel with any order of men, unless they disbelieved in revelation and a future state. He would indeed have sided with Sacheverell against Daniel Burgess, if he thought the Church was in danger. His hand and his heart were always open to charity. The objects under his own roof were only a few of the subjects for relief. He was at the head of subscription in cases of distress. His guinea, as he said of another man of a bountiful disposition, was always ready. He wrote an exhortation to public bounty. He drew up a paper to recommend the French prisoners, in the last war but one, to the English benevolence; which was of service. He implored the hand of benevolence for others, even when he almost seemed a proper object of it himself.

Like his hero Savage, while in company with him, he is supposed to have formerly strolled about the streets almost houseless, and as if he was obliged to go without the cheerful meal of the day, or to wander about for one, as is reported of Homer. If this were true, it is no wonder if he was an unknown, or uninquired after, for a long time:

"Slow rises worth by poverty depressed."

When once distinguished, as he observes of Ascham, he gained admirers. He was fitted by nature for a critic. His "Lives of the Poets" (like all his biographical pieces) are well written. He gives us the pulp without the husks. He has told their personal history very well. But every thing is not new. Perhaps what Mr. Steevens helped him to, has increased the number of the best anecdotes. But

as he wrote, and called his poetry artificial. If word and thought go together, the odes of Gray were not to the satisfaction of our critic. But what composition can stand this sharp-sighted critic? He made some fresh observations on Milton, by placing him in a new point of view: and if he has shown more of his excellencies than Addison does, he accompanies them with more defects. He took no critic from the shelf, neither Aristotle, Bossu, nor Boileau. He hardly liked to quote, much more to steal. He drew his judgments from the principles of human nature, of which the "Rambler" is full, before the "Elements of Criticism" by Lord Kaims made their appearance.

It may be inserted here, that Johnson, soon after his coming to London, had thought of writing a History of the revival of Learning. The booksellers had other service to offer him. But he never undertook it. The proprietors of the "Universal History" wished him to take any part in that voluminous work. But he declined their offer. His last employers wanted him to undertake the life of Spenser. But he said, Warton had left little or nothing for him to do. A system of morals next was proposed. But perhaps he chose to promise nothing more. He thought, as, like the running horse in Horace, he had done his best, he should give up the race and the chase. His dependent Levett died suddenly under his roof. He preserved his name from oblivion, by writing an epitaph for him, which shows that his poetical fire was not extinguished, and is so appropriate, that it could belong to no other person in the world. Johnson said, that the remark of appropriation, was just criticism: his friend was induced to pronounce, that he would not have so good an epitaph written for himself. Pope has nothing equal to it in his sepulchral poetry. When he dined with Mr. Wilkes, at a private table in the city, their mutual altercations were forgot, at least for that day. Johnson did not remember the sharpness of a paper against his description or definition of an alphabetical point animadverted upon in his dictionary by that man of acuteness; who, in his turn, forgot the severity of a pamphlet of Johnson. All was, during this meal, a reciprocation of wit and good humour. During the annual contest in the city, Johnson confessed, that Wilkes would make a very good Chamberlain. When Johnson (who had said that he would as soon dine with *Jack Ketch* as with *Jack Wilkes*) could sit at the same table with this patriot, it may be concluded he did not write his animosities in marble.—Johnson was famous for saying what are called *good things*. Mr. Boswell, who listened to him for so many years, has probably remembered many. He mentioned many of them to Paoli, who paid

im the last tribute of a visit to his grave. If Johnson had had as good yes as Boswell, he might have seen more trees in Scotland, perhaps, han he mentions.

This is not the record-office for his sayings: but a few must be re-collected here. For Plutarch has not thought it beneath his dignity o relate some things of this sort, of some of his heroes. "Pray Dr. Johnson" (said somebody) "is the master of the mansion at Streat-ham a man of much conversation, or is he only wise and silent?" "He strikes," says Johnson, "once an hour, and I suppose strikes right." Mr. Thrale left him a legacy, and made him an executor. It came to Johnson's ears, that the great bookseller in the Strand, on receiving the last manuscript sheet of his Dictionary, had said, "Give Johnson his money, for I thank God I have done with him." The philologer took care that he should receive his compliments, and be informed, "he was extremely glad he returned thanks to God for any thing." Well known is the rude reproof he gave to a talker, who asserted, that every individual in Scotland had literature. (By the by, modern statesmen do not wish that every one in the King's dominions should be able to write and read.) "The general learning of the Scotch nation" (said he, in a bad humour) "resembles the condition of a ship's crew, condemned to short allowance of provisions; every one has a mouthful, and nobody a belly full." Of this enough. His size has been described to be large: his mind and person both in a large scale. His face and features are happily preserved by Reynolds and by Nollikens. His elocution was energetic, and, in the words of

about them, he said, he appropriated them fr
Hody. He was desirous of seeing every thing tl e.
in art or nature; and to resemble his Imlac in
"Rasselas." It was the fault of fortune that he did not
on every thing at home and abroad. He had
water, and observed something of a sea-life: of
scene, and of the sickness and turbulence belor
he had felt enough. He had seen a little of
discipline, by having passed whole days and ni
in the tents, at Warley Common. He was
entertaining in his description of what he seen.
enough to illuminate him. The Giant and Corsican
objects of attention to him. The riding-horses in Astl
theatre (no new public amusement, for Homer alludes to
to see; and on the fireworks of Torri he wrote a Latin poem.

The study of humanity, as was injuriously said of the great Bentley, had not made him inhuman. He never wantonly brandished his formidable weapon. He meant to keep his enemies off. He did not mean, as in the advice of Radcliffe to Mead, "to bully the world, lest the world should bully him." He seemed to be a man of great clemency to all subordinate beings. He said, "he would not sit at table, where a lobster that had been roasted alive was one of the dishes." His charities were many; only not so extensive as his pity, for that was universal. An evening club, for three nights in every week, was contrived to amuse him, in Essex-street, founded, according to his own words, "in frequency and parsimony;" to which he gave a set of rules, as Ben Jonson did his *leges convivales* at the Devil Tavern—Johnson asked one of his executors, a few days before his death (which, according to his will, he expected every day) "where do you intend to bury me?" He answered, "in Westminster-abbey." "Then," continued he, "place a stone over my grave (probably to notify the spot) that my remains may not be disturbed." Who will come forth with an inscription for him in the Poets corner? Who should have thought that Garrick and Johnson would have their last sleep together? It were to be wished he could have written his own epitaph with propriety. None of the lapidary inscriptions by Dr. Freind have more merit than what Johnson wrote on Thrale, on Goldsmith, and Mrs. Salisbury. By the way, one of these was criticised, by some men of learning and taste, from the table of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and conveyed to him in a round robin. Maty, in his "Review," praises his Latin epitaphs very highly. This son of study

and of indigence died worth above seventeen hundred pounds: Milton died worth fifteen hundred. His legacy to his black servant, Frank, is noble and exemplary. Milton left in his hand-writing the titles of some future subjects for his pen: so did Johnson.

Johnson died *by a quiet and silent expiration*, to use his own words on Milton: and his funeral was splendidly and numerously attended. The friends of the Doctor were happy on his easy departure, for they apprehended he might have died hard. At the end of this sketch, it may be hinted (sooner might have been prepossession) that Johnson told this writer, for he saw he always had his eye and his ear upon him, that at some time or other he might be called upon to assist a posthumous account of him.

A hint was given to our author, a few years ago, by this Rhapsodist, to write his own life, lest somebody should write it for him. He has reason to believe, he has left a manuscript biography behind him. His executors, all honourable men, will sit in judgment upon his papers. Thuanus, Buchanan, Huetius, and others, have been their own historians.

The memory of some people, says Mably very lately, "is their understanding." This may be thought, by some readers, to be the case in point. Whatever anecdotes were furnished by memory, this pen did not choose to part with to any compiler. His little bit of gold he has worked into as much gold-leaf as he could.

T. T.

ECOLLECTIONS OF JOHNSON BY

RICHARD CUMBERLAND.



RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHNSON BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.[1]

WHO will say that Johnson himself would have been such a champion in literature, such a front-rank soldier in the fields f fame, if he had not been pressed into the service, and driven on o glory with the bayonet of sharp necessity pointed at his back? If ortune had turned him into a field of clover, he would have laid own and rolled in it. The mere manual labour of writing would ot have allowed his lassitude and love of ease to have taken the pen ut of the inkhorn, unless the cravings of hunger had reminded him hat he must fill the sheet before he saw the table cloth. He might ndeed have knocked down Osbourne for a blockhead, but he would ot have knocked him down with a folio of his own writing. He ould perhaps have been the dictator of a club, and wherever he sate

solutions possible been the most indolent mortal
good man by nature, a great man by genius, we ar
what he was by compulsion.

Johnson's first style was naturally energetic, his mi
turgid to a fault, his latter style was softened down na
into periods, more tuneful and more intelligible. xecu
rapid, yet his mind was not easily provoked into e the
we find in his writings was not the variety of choi
impulse of his proper genius, but tasks imposed upo
dealers in ink, and contracts on his part submitted to in
of the pressing calls of hungry want; for, painful as it is to
have heard that illustrious scholar assert (and he never v
the truth of fact) that he subsisted himself for a considerable t
time upon the scanty pittance of fourpence halfpenny per ow
melancholy to reflect that his vast trunk and stimulati ite
were to be supported by what will barely feed the wea nt!
Less, much less, than Master Betty has earned in one n , would
have cheered the mighty mind and maintained the athletic body of
Samuel Johnson in comfort and abundance for a twelvemonth. Alas!
I am not fit to paint his character; nor is there need of it; *Etiam mortuus loquitur:* every man, who can buy a book, has bought a *Boswell;* Johnson is known to all the reading world. I also knew him well, respected him highly, loved him sincerely: it was never my chance to see him in those moments of moroseness and ill humour, which are imputed to him, perhaps with truth, for who would slander him? But I am not warranted by any experience of those humours to speak of him otherwise than of a friend, who always met me with kindness, and from whom I never separated without regret.—When I sought his company he had no capricious excuses for withholding it, but lent himself to every invitation with cordiality, and brought good humour with him, that gave life to the circle he was in. He presented himself always in his fashion of apparel; a brown coat with metal buttons, black waistcoat and worsted stockings, with a flowing bob wig was the style of his wardrobe, but they were in perfectly good trim, and with the ladies, which he generally met, he had nothing of the slovenly philosopher about him; he fed heartily, but not voraciously, and was extremely courteous in his commendations of any dish, that pleased his palate; he suffered his next neighbour to squeeze the China oranges into his wine glass after dinner, which else perchance had gone aside, and trickled into his shoes, for the good man had neither straight sight nor steady nerves.

At the tea table he had considerable demands upon his favourite beverage, and I remember when Sir Joshua Reynolds at my house reminded him that he had drank eleven cups, he replied—"Sir, I did not count your glasses of wine, why should you number up my cups of tea?" And then laughing in perfect good humour he added—"Sir, I should have released the lady from any further trouble, if it had not been for your remark; but you have reminded me that I want one of the dozen, and I must request Mrs. Cumberland to round up my number—" When he saw the readiness and complacency, with which my wife obeyed his call, he turned a kind and cheerful look upon her and said—"Madam, I must tell you for your comfort you have escaped much better than a certain lady did awhile ago, upon whose patience I intruded greatly more than I have done on yours; but the lady asked me for no other purpose but to make a Zany of me, and set me gabbling to a parcel of people I knew nothing of; so, madam, I had my revenge of her; for I swallowed five and twenty cups of her tea, and did not treat her with as many words—" I can only say my wife would have made tea for him as long as the New River could have supplied her with water.

It was on such occasions he was to be seen in his happiest moments, when animated by the cheering attention of friends, whom he liked, he would give full scope to those talents for narration, in which I verily think he was unrivalled both in the brilliancy of his wit, the flow of his humour and the energy of his language. Anecdotes of times past, scenes of his own life, and characters of humourists, enthusiasts, crack-brained projectors and a variety of

make it himself. The following apology however
him, when speaking of his tour I observed to him
as rather too sharp upon a country and people,
him so handsomely—"Do you think so, Cumbe
"Then I give you leave to say, and you may q
there are more gentlemen in Scotland than there

But I don't relish these sayings, and I am to
them; we can no more judge of men by these d
lips, than we can guess at the contents of the riv
of its water. If we were to estimate the wise n
Laertius's scraps of their sayings, what a parcel of old
we account them to have been!

The expanse of matter, which Johnson had found
intellectual storehouse, the correctness with which he
and the readiness with which he could turn to any a
wanted to make present use of, were the properties in
contemplated with the most admiration. Some have called him a savage; they were only so far right in the resemblance, as that, like the savage, he never came into suspicious company without his spear in his hand and his bow and quiver at his back. In quickness of intellect few ever equalled him, in profundity of erudition many have surpassed him. I do not think he had a pure and classical taste, nor was apt to be best pleased with the best authors, but as a general scholar he ranks very high. When I would have consulted him upon certain points of literature, whilst I was making my collections from the Greek dramatists for my essays in "The Observer," he candidly acknowledged that his studies had not lain amongst them, and certain it is there is very little shew of literature in his "Ramblers," and in the passage, where he quotes Aristotle, he has not correctly given the meaning of the original. But this was merely the result of haste and inattention, neither is he so to be measured, for he had so many parts and properties of scholarship about him, that you can only fairly review him as a man of general knowledge. As a poet his translations of Juvenal gave him a name in the world, and gained him the applause of Pope. He was a writer of tragedy, but his "Irene" gives him no conspicuous rank in that department. As an essayist he merits more consideration; his "Ramblers" are in every body's hands; about them opinions vary, and I rather believe the style of these essays is not now considered as a good model; this he corrected in his more advanced age, as may be seen in his "Lives of the Poets," where his diction, though occasionally elaborate and highly metaphorical, is not

nearly so inflated and ponderous, as in the "Ramblers." He was an acute and able critic; the enthusiastic admirers of Milton and the friends of Gray will have something to complain of, but criticism is a task, which no man executes to all men's satisfaction. His selection of a certain passage in the "Mourning Bride" of Congreve which he extols so rapturously, is certainly a most unfortunate sample; but unless the oversights of a critic are less pardonable than those of other men, we may pass this over in a work of merit, which abounds in beauties far more prominent than its defects, and much more pleasing to contemplate. In works professedly of fancy he is not very copious; yet in his "Rasselas" we have much to admire, and enough to make us wish for more. It is the work of an illuminated mind, and offers many wise and deep reflections, cloathed in beautiful and harmonious diction. We are not indeed familiar with such personages as Johnson has imagined for the characters of his fable, but if we are not exceedingly interested in their story, we are infinitely gratified with their conversation and remarks. In conclusion, Johnson's æra was not wanting in men to be distinguished for their talents, yet if one was to be selected out as the first great literary character of the time, I believe all voices would concur in naming him. Let me here insert the following lines, descriptive of his character, though not long since written by me and to be found in a public print——

"On Samuel Johnson.

"Herculean strength and a Stentorian voice

was so soon cut off. There is no doubt but his g
familiarised to the business, would have inspired h
great things. His first comedy of "The Good-nat
read and applauded in its manuscript by Edmund
circle, in which he then lived and moved: under
came with those testimonials to the director of
theatre, as could not fail to open all the avenues to
speak all the favour and attention from the performe
that the applauding voice of him, whose applause
could give it. This comedy has enough to justify t
of its literary patron, and secure its author against any
tion, for it has the stamp of a man of talents upo
popularity with the audience did not quite keep pace
tations, that were grounded on the fiat it had ante
honoured with. It was a first effort, however, and did not discourage its ingenious author from invoking his Muse a second time. It was now, whilst his labours were in projection, that I first met him at the British Coffee-house, as I have already related somewhat out of place. He dined with us as a visitor, introduced as I think by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and we held a consultation upon the naming of his comedy, which some of the company had read, and which he detailed to the rest after his manner with a great deal of good humour. Somebody suggested—"She Stoops to Conquer"—and that title was agreed upon. When I perceived an embarrassment in his manner towards me, which I could readily account for, I lost no time to put him at his ease, and I flatter myself I was successful. As my heart was ever warm towards my contemporaries, I did not counterfeit, but really felt a cordial interest in his behalf, and I had soon the pleasure to perceive that he credited me for my sincerity—"You and I," said he, "have very different motives for resorting to the stage. I write for money, and care little about fame—" I was touched by this melancholy confession, and from that moment busied myself assiduously amongst all my connexions in his cause. The whole company pledged themselves to the support of the ingenuous poet, and faithfully kept their promise to him. In fact he needed all that could be done for him, as Mr. Colman, then manager of Covent-Garden theatre, protested against the comedy, when as yet he had not struck upon a name for it. Johnson at length stood forth in all his terrors as champion for the piece, and backed by us his clients and retainers demanded a fair trial. Colman again protested, but, with that salvo for his own reputation, liberally lent his stage to one of the

most eccentric productions that ever found its way to it, and "She Stoops to Conquer" was put into rehearsal.

We were not over-sanguine of success, but perfectly determined to struggle hard for our author: we accordingly assembled our strength at the Shakespear Tavern in a considerable body for an early dinner, where Samuel Johnson took the chair at the head of a long table, and was the life and soul of the corps: the poet took post silently by his side with the Burkes, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Caleb Whitefoord and a phalanx of North-British pre-determined applauders, under the banner of Major Mills, all good men and true. Our illustrious president was in inimitable glee, and poor Goldsmith that day took all his raillery as patiently and complacently as my friend Boswell would have done any day, or every day of his life. In the mean time we did not forget our duty, and though we had a better comedy going, in which Johnson was chief actor, we betook ourselves in good time to our separate and allotted posts, and waited the awful drawing up of the curtain. As our stations were pre-concerted, so were our signals for plaudits arranged and determined upon in a manner, that gave every one his cue where to look for them, and how to follow them up.

We had amongst us a very worthy and efficient member, long since lost to his friends and the world at large, Adam Drummond, of amiable memory, who was gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious, laugh, that ever echoed from the human lungs. The neighing of the horse of the son of

prejudice to the author; but alas, it was now too late to rein him in; he had laughed upon my signal where he found no joke, and now unluckily he fancied that he found a joke in almost every thing that was said; so that nothing in nature could be more mal-a-propos than some of his bursts every now and then were. These were dangerous moments, for the pit began to take umbrage; but we carried our play through, and triumphed not only over Colman's judgment, but our own.

As the life of poor Oliver Goldsmith was now fast approaching to its period, I conclude my account of him with gratitude for the epitaph he bestowed on me in his poem called "Retaliation." It was upon a proposal started by Edmund Burke, that a party of friends, who had dined together at Sir Joshua Reynolds's and my house, should meet at the St. James's Coffee-House, which accordingly took place, and was occasionally repeated with much festivity and good fellowship. Dr. Bernard, Dean of Derry, a very amiable and old friend of mine, Dr. Douglas, since Bishop of Salisbury, Johnson, David Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund and Richard Burke, Hickey, with two or three others constituted our party. At one of these meetings an idea was suggested of extemporary epitaphs upon the parties present; pen and ink were called for, and Garrick off hand wrote an epitaph with a good deal of humour upon poor Goldsmith, who was the first in jest, as he proved to be in reality, that we committed to the grave. The dean also gave him an epitaph, and Sir Joshua illuminated the dean's verses with a sketch of his bust in pen and ink inimitably caricatured. Neither Johnson nor Burke wrote any thing, and when I perceived Oliver was rather sore, and seemed to watch me with that kind of attention, which indicated his expectation of something in the same kind of burlesque with theirs', I thought it time to press the joke no further, and wrote a few couplets at a side table, which when I had finished and was called upon by the company to exhibit, Goldsmith with much agitation besought me to spare him, and I was about to tear them, when Johnson wrested them out of my hand, and in a loud voice read them at the table. I have now lost all recollection of them, and in fact they were little worth remembering, but as they were serious and complimentary, the effect they had upon Goldsmith was the more pleasing for being so entirely unexpected. The concluding line, which is the only one I can call to mind, was—

"All mourn the poet, I lament the man—"

This I recollect, because he repeated it several times, and seemed much gratified by it. At our next meeting he produced his epitaphs as they stand in the little posthumous poem above-mentioned, and this was the last time he ever enjoyed the company of his friends.

As he had served up the company under the similitude of various sorts of meat, I had in the mean time figured them under that of liquors, which little poem I rather think was printed, but of this I am not sure. Goldsmith sickened and died, and we had one concluding meeting at my house, when it was decided to publish his "Retaliation," and Johnson at the same time undertook to write an epitaph for our lamented friend, to whom we proposed to erect a monument by subscription in Westminster-Abbey. This epitaph Johnson executed: but in the criticism, that was attempted against it, and in the Round-Robin signed at Mr. Beauclerk's house I had no part. I had no acquaintance with that gentleman, and was never in his house in my life.

Thus died Oliver Goldsmith in his chambers in the Temple at a period of life, when his genius was yet in its vigour, and fortune seemed disposed to smile upon him. I have heard Dr. Johnson relate with infinite humour the circumstance of his rescuing him from a ridiculous dilemma by the purchase money of his "Vicar of Wakefield," which he sold on his behalf to Dodsley, and, as I think, for the sum of ten pounds only. He had run up a debt with his landlady for board and lodging of some few pounds, and was at his wit's-end how to wipe off the score and keep a roof over his head, except by [redacted]

his talents, which thenceforward enabled him to keep his st
society, and cultivate the friendship of many eminent persons, who, whilst they smiled at his eccentricities, esteemed him for his genius and good qualities.

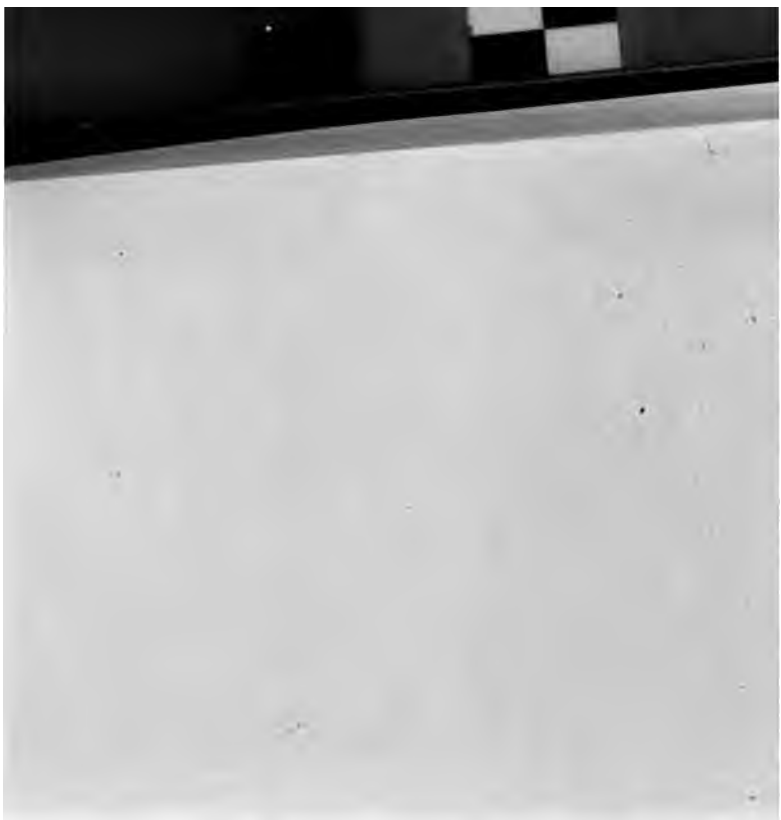
* * * * *

I saw[1] old Samuel Johnson standing beside his[2] grave, at the foot of Shakespeare's monument and bathed in tears: a few succeeding years laid him in earth, and though marble shall preserve for ages the exact resemblance of his form and features, his own strong pen has pictured out a transcript of his mind that shall outlive that and the very language which he laboured to perpetuate. Johnson's best days were dark, and only when his life was far in the decline, he enjoyed a gleam of fortune long withheld. Compare him with his countryman and contemporary last-mentioned,[3] and it will be one instance amongst many, that the man who only brings the Muses' bantlings into the world, has a better lot in it than he who has the credit of begetting them.

[1] Memoirs of Cumberland, vol. ii., p. 210.
[2] Garrick's.
[3] Garrick.

DR. JOHNSON AT THE CHELSEA CHINA MANUFACTORY.

MR. A. STEPHENS was told by the foreman of the Chelsea China Manufactory (then in the workhouse of St. Luke's, Middlesex), that Dr. Johnson had conceived a notion that he was capable of improving on the manufacture of china. He even applied to the directors of the Chelsea China Works, and was allowed to *bake* his compositions in their ovens in Lawrence Street, Chelsea. He was accordingly accustomed to go down with his housekeeper, about twice a week, and staid the whole day, she carrying a basket of provisions with her. The Doctor, who was not allowed to enter the *mixing* room, had access to every other part of the house, and formed his composition in a particular apartment, without being overlooked by anyone. He had also free access to the oven, and superintended the whole of the process; but completely failed, both as to composition and baking, for his materials always yielded to the intensity of



ANECDOTES AND REMARKS.

by

BISHOP PERCY.



ANECDOTES AND REMARKS,

BY BISHOP PERCY.[1]

STOURBRIDGE SCHOOL.

SIR JOHN HAWKINS is not correct in saying that Johnson, in early life, had not been accustomed to the conversation of gentlemen. His genius was so distinguished, that, although little more than a schoolboy, he was admitted to the best company, both at Lichfield and Stourbridge; and, in the latter neighbourhood, had met even with George, afterwards Lord Lyttelton; with whom, having some colloquial disputes, he is supposed to have conceived that prejudice which so improperly influenced him in the Life of that worthy nobleman. But this could scarcely have happened when he was a boy of fifteen; and, therefore, it is probable he occasionally visited Stour-

Johnson was so extremely short-sighted, that he had no con on of rural beauties; and, therefore, it is not to be wondered. he should prefer the conversation of the metropolis to the sile es and views of Hampstead and Greenwich; which, however d he could not see. In his Tour through the Highlands land, he has somewhere observed, that one mountain ike another; so utterly unconscious was he of the wonderful of sublime and beautiful scenes those mountains exhibited. I wa e present when the case of a gentleman was mentioned, who, with great taste and skill, formed the lawns and plantations abo house into most beautiful landscapes, to complete one part of the scenery, was obliged to apply for leave to a neighbour with whom he was not upon cordial terms; when Johnson made the following remark, which at once shows what ideas he had of landscape improvement, and how happily he applied the most common incidents to moral instruction. "See how inordinate desires enslave a man! No desire can be more innocent than to have a pretty garden, yet, indulged to excess, it has made this poor man submit to beg a favour of his enemy."

JOHNSON'S MANNER OF COMPOSING.

Johnson's manner of composing has not been rightly understood. He was so extremely short-sighted, from the defect in his eyes, that writing was inconvenient to him; for, whenever he wrote, he was obliged to hold the paper close to his face. He, therefore, never composed what we call a foul draft on paper of any thing he published, but used to revolve the subject in his mind, and turn and form every period, till he had brought the whole to the highest correctness and the most perfect arrangement. Then his uncommonly retentive memory enabled him to deliver a whole essay, properly finished, whenever it was called for. I have often heard him humming and forming periods, in low whispers to himself, when shallow observers thought he was muttering prayers, &c. But Johnson is well known to have represented his own practice, in the following passage in his Life of Pope: "Of composition there are different methods. Some employ at once memory and invention; and, with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only when, in their own opinion, they have completed them."

DISLIKE OF SWIFT.

The extraordinary prejudice and dislike of Swift, manifested on all occasions by Johnson, whose political opinions coincided exactly with his, has been difficult to account for; and is therefore attributed to his failing in getting a degree, which Swift might not choose to solicit, for a reason given below. The real cause is believed to be as follows: The Rev. Dr. Madden, who distinguished himself so laudably by giving premiums to the young students of Dublin College, for which he had raised a fund, by applying for contributions to the nobility and gentry of Ireland, had solicited the same from Swift, when he was sinking into that morbid idiocy which only terminated with his life, and was saving every shilling to found his hospital for lunatics; but his application was refused with so little delicacy, as left in Dr. Madden a rooted dislike to Swift's character, which he communicated to Johnson, whose friendship he gained on the following occasion: Dr. Madden wished to address some person of high rank, in prose or verse; and, desirous of having his composition examined and corrected by some writer of superior talents, had been recommended to Johnson, who was at that time in extreme indigence; and having finished his task, would probably have thought himself well rewarded with a guinea or two, when, to his great surprise, Dr. Madden generously slipped ten guineas into his hand. This made such an impression on Johnson, as led him to adopt every opinion of Dr. Madden, and to resent, as warmly as himself, Swift's rough refusal of

care to a diligent perusal of all such English writers
correct in their language, and under every sentence w
to quote he drew a line, and noted in the margin the firs
word under which it was to occur. He then delivered th
his clerks, who transcribed each sentence on a separate
and arranged the same under the word referred to. B
he collected the several words and their different signi
when the whole arrangement was alphabetically forme
definitions of their meanings, and collected their ety
Skinner, Junius, and other writers on the subject. In comp
alphabetical arrangement, he, no doubt, would recur to for
tionaries, to see if any words had escaped him; but this, w
Boswell makes the first step in the business, was in reality
and it was doubtless to this happy arrangement that Johnson
in a few years, what employed the foreign academies nearly
century.

MISS WILLIAMS.

During the summer of 1764, Johnson paid a visit to me, at my vicarage-house in Easton-Mauduit, near Wellingborough, in Northamptonshire, and spent parts of the months of June, July, and August with me, accompanied by his friend Miss Williams, whom Mrs. Percy found a very agreeable companion. As poor Miss Williams, whose history is so connected with that of Johnson, has not had common justice done her by his biographers, it may be proper to mention, that, so far from being a constant source of disquiet and vexation to him, although she had been totally blind for the last thirty years of her life, her mind was so well cultivated, and her conversation so agreeable, that she very much enlivened and diverted his solitary hours; and, though there may have happened some slight disagreements between her and Mrs. Desmoulins, which, at the moment, disquieted him, the friendship of Miss Williams contributed very much to his comfort and happiness. For, having been the intimate friend of his wife, who had invited her to his house, she continued to reside with him, and in her he had always a conversable companion; who, whether at his dinners or at his tea-table, entertained his friends with her sensible conversation. Being extremely clean and neat in her person and habits, she never gave the least disgust by her manner of eating; and when she made tea for Johnson and his friends, conducted it with so much delicacy, by gently touching the outside of the cup, to feel, by the heat, the tea as it ascended within, that it

was rather matter of admiration than of dislike to every attentive observer.

TRUTH.

Johnson was fond of disputation, and willing to see what could be said on each side of the question, when a subject was argued. At all other times, no man had a more scrupulous regard for truth; from which, I verily believe, he would not have deviated to save his life.

ROBERT LEVETT.

Mr. Boswell describes Levett as a man of a strange, grotesque appearance, stiff and formal in his manner. This is misrepresented. He was a modest, reserved man; humble and unaffected; ready to execute any commission for Johnson; and grateful for his patronage.

MR. THRALE.

Of Mr. Thrale, Johnson has given a true character in a Latin epitaph, inscribed on his monument in Streatham church. This most amiable and worthy gentleman certainly deserved every tribute of gratitude from the Doctor and his literary friends; who were always welcome at his hospitable table. It must therefore give us great concern to see his origin degraded by any of them, in a manner that might be extremely injurious to his elegant and accomplished daughters, if it could not be contradicted; for his father is represented to

title as general and unconfined as possible. He ackno
"The Spectator" was the most happily chosen of all
"The Tatler" the next to it: and after long considerati
a third title, equally capacious and suited to his purpose
thought upon "The Rambler;"[1] and it would be difficu
other that so exactly coincided with the motto he has ad
title-page—

"Quo me cunque rapit tempestas deferor hospes."

FEAR OF DEATH.

Mr. Boswell states, that "Dr. Johnson's conduct, after he had associated with Savage and others, was not so strictly virtuous, in one respect, as when he was a younger man. This seems to have been suggested by Mr. Boswell, to account for Johnson's religious terrors on the approach of death; as if they proceeded from his having been led by Savage to vicious indulgences with the women of the town, in his nocturnal rambles. This, if true, Johnson was not likely to have confessed to Mr. Boswell, and therefore must be received as a pure invention of his own. But if Johnson ever conversed with those unfortunate females, it is believed to have been in order to reclaim them from their dissolute life, by moral and religious impressions; for to one of his friends he once related a conversation of that sort which he had with a young female in the street, and that, asking her what she thought she was made for, her reply was, "she supposed to please the gentlemen." His friend intimating his surprise, that he should have had communications with street-walkers, implying a suspicion that they were not of a moral tendency, Johnson expressed the highest indignation that any other motive could ever be suspected.

[1] A paper, entitled The Rambler, appeared in 1712. Only one number of it seems to have escaped the ravages of time; this is in the British Museum.—*Wright.*

DIARY

OF A

VISIT TO ENGLAND

IN 1775

BY DR. THOMAS CAMPBELL,

CHANCELLOR OF ST. MACARTIN'S, CLOGHER.

First published by Samuel Raymond, M.A., Sydney, New South Wales, 1854.



ANECDOTES AND REMARKS.

BY

BISHOP PERCY.



that English neatness, I had heard so much of. The house was Thompson's, some distance from the town, which hindered me from looking into the Cathedral, and the Parish Church. The Cathedral was a cross, with the steeple in the middle, not unlike the Cathedral of Armagh. The bridge was composed of the flat elliptic arches, and seemed *en passant* to be very elegant. The town itself seems poor and little.

On the 25th we got into Chester at 8 o'clock at night. Chester is built of wood chiefly, and is surrounded with a wall, which affords an agreeable walk, flagged, about four feet broad, the periphery of which is one mile, three quarters, and one hundred and one yards. The Dee winds prettily round one side of the town, and a canal through a rock is now a cutting round the other. N.B.—There are nine Churches in Chester; yet the town is small in comparison of Birmingham. The Cathedral of St. Werburgh's is worth seeing, especially the quire, which is ornamented with oak, beautifully carved. The old cloysters still remain, and have a venerable appearance. There has been an old Abbey. The Bishop's house fronts the Abbey Square. From Chester to Bermingham, seventy five miles. We arrived at near one o'clock at night on the 26th. Whitchurch (twenty miles from Chester) is a pretty clean old town? and Newport (forty-one from ditto) neither so large, nor so clean. Here we met several people very drunk: this, we supposed, was owing to the festivity on the Sunday; and now the night wrapped the sweet country of Stafford and Warwickshire, from

London road, for there I saw the tomb of Shakespear; was in the room wherein he was born, and sat in his chair. Stratford is an ancient town, built mostly of wood, and seems now in a deserted state, without any manufacture, but the woolcombing, of which trade Shakespear originally was. There is a handsome Town house, lately built at the expense of the Corporation, and neighbouring gentlemen, in a nitch whereof, a statue of Shakespear, the gift of Mr. Garrick, stands. In the great room of it are two pictures, one of Shakespear by Wilson, the gift also of Garrick, and another of Garrick himself, embracing the bust of Shakespear, by Gainsborough, done at the charge of the Corporation. The house, where Shakespear died, stood near the beautiful old Chapel in the middle of the town; and in the garden belonging, grew the famous mulberry tree, whereof I saw a box in a toy-shop there. The Church is large, consisting of a large aisle, and a choir, in both of which there are several monumental inscriptions. Shakespear's tombstone lies at the chancel of the choir, with his own two lines denouncing curses on him who shall move his bones: by the way, I conceive the reason of this curse was a custom, which has been observed at Stratford, of collecting the bones of the dead, and throwing them into a vault under the steeple. The monument raised by his wife, consisting of a half-length figure, is entirely Gothic; but not more so than the inscription under it. On the right of the Chancel, lieth a monumental statue, in a horizontal position, with precatory hands, of John Combe, on which Shakespear wrote his famous distich.[1] After treading with almost religious adoration on this classic ground, we could not leave Stratford without many reflections. N.B.—Avon is there a poor little muddy stream, which would have for ever remained inglorious, if this Swan had not warbled on its banks: little gabbards, with coals, and groceries, &c., come up here from Bristol.

FEBRUARY 28th. We set off from Shipton by Chappel-house, and breakfasted at Woodstock, the greatest part of which road is through a cold clay, highly cultivated in the broad ridges; but very thin of trees, as most of the corn grounds, I passed through are: for Cheshire and Shropshire are rather pasturage. The parts about Chappel-house

[1] "*Ten in the hundred* lies here engraved,
'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not saved:
If any man ask, Who lies in this tomb,
O! ho! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe."

But as to the authorship of this verse, see the note by Steevens, p. 80, Malone's ed., 1813.—*Editor.*

were extremely course, and hilly. But Woodstock, once so famous for the bower of Rosamond, presented us with a new scene, the most beautiful I ever beheld—the park of Blenheim. For this, and the University, at which we arrived about twelve o'clock, vide the Oxford guide. N.B.—We went to the Coffee house in the evening, where almost all the Gownsmen we saw were tipsy, and the streets re-echoed with bacchanalian crys, as we returned from supper with Mr. Barnard. The next night also, we went to another Coffee house, and there the scene was only shifted, all muzzy. This, happily abated my enthusiasm conceived for an Oxford education; for such was the venerability of the place, that after taking a cursory view of it, I was almost in a paroxism of superstition.

Oxfordshire seems but a wettish county, highly cultivated, and not very thickly planted—it being mostly corn grounds: but uncultivated commons evince what the native state of the country is, for they were all either heath or rushes. The first of March, at Oxford, was extremely cold; the rain came on in the evening, and it was raining at six next morning, but the day turned out a fine one, which made the road to London very pleasant; and nothing could be finer than Berkshire. Along this road we saw General Conway's, Lord Harcourt's, Clifton, Windsor, &c. From Brentford to London is almost all city, such as the bad parts of Dublin. On the 2nd of March, Covent Garden Play house received me; so that, in one week from leaving Dublin, I had seen a syllabus of all England. A Gownsman of Oxford thus painted the fellows of All Souls—they

black bird, thrush, lark, and canary birds, so exactly, that had I heard the same sounds, at proper times, and places, I should never have suspected them to be any other than original: he also did equally well the mewing, and caterwauling of cats, barking of dogs, and dogs hunting cats, &c.

"Braganza"[1] went off well: the poetry is happy enough, and the catastrophe is striking. After the representation of this play, a scene ensued which strongly marked the English character. It was the tenth night of the play, and it seems that custom hath decided that, after the ninth night, the prologue and epilogue should be discontinued. Neither was announced in the bills: however when the players came on, the prologue was called for, and Mr. Palmer, a very handsome mouthing blockhead, answered the call. When the overture for the farce began to be played, the epilogue was called for, the music ceased for it could not be heard—a long interval ensued—the players came on: they stood their ground for a long time, but were hissed at length off. Mr. Vernon attempted to speak, but he would not be heard: still the cry was—off—off—the epilogue, &c. After a long pause, the bell rang for the musick—this set the house in an uproar—the women however, who were singers, came on, in hopes of disarming these savage beasts; but they were a second time pelted off: then Weston, a mighty favorite of the town, came on: he was pelted with oranges; however he stuck to the stage, as if he had vegetated on the spot; and only looked at the gallery, and pointed up at it when the orange fell, as if to say, I know you that threw that: once he took up an orange, as if in thankfulness, and put it in his pocket: this and a thousand other humorous tricks he played, yet all to no purpose, John Bull roared on, and poor Weston could not prevail. The Players came again and again: Vernon, after a third effort, was allowed to tell the pit, that Mrs. Yates was sent for, and begged leave that the farce might go on, till she came; but this was denied: the house grew more and more clamorous, calling for Garrick or Mrs. Yates: at length Mr. Yates comes on, and tho' he declared in the most solemn manner, that his wife was gone sick to bed, yet this would not tame the savages of the gallery. The Players were twice hissed off after this, till a promise of Mrs. Yates' appearance on Monday somewhat abated their madness. But what to me seemed most expressive of Angloism was the conduct of some in the pit beside me:

[1] Braganza was the production of an Irishman, Robert Jephson, Esq., who also wrote the Count of Narbonne and other pieces. He died in 1803.—*Editor.*

some were more moderate, and asked others, why they made such a noise: one before asked another behind, how he dared make such a noise, and told him after some altercation, that he deserved to be turned out of the pit: this produced no other effect, but to make my friend behind me more vociferous. The smallest fraction of such language would have produced a duel in the Dublin Theatres, and the millionth part of the submissions, made by these poor players, would have appeased an Irish audience, yea, if they have murdered their fathers.

Sunday, the 5th. I breakfasted with Mr. Pearson (Figtree Court Middle Temple), and went with him to the Temple Church—a most beautiful Gothic structure. The service was ill read, and the singing not according to the rubrick; for it was immediately after the second Lesson. The sermon was preached by the Master of the Society, a brother to Thurlow the Attorney General. The discourse was the most meagre composition (on our Saviour's temptation) and the delivery worse. He stood like Gulliver stuck in the marrow bone, with the Sermon (newspaper like) in his hand, and without grace, or emphasis, he in slow cadence measured it forth. In the evening, I strolled to Westminster Abbey, where I (being locked in) was obliged to listen to a discourse still duller, and as ill delivered.

As I love to speculatise upon human nature; I can not help setting down, lest I should forget it, an anecdote I heard this day from my fellow traveller G——, which I should never have heard, had he met

duct, and soliciting his support of Lord Townsend's administration. What a creature is man!

G—— told me, that the grand hold the Provost got of Rigby's esteem was this. R—— was distressed in the first career of ambition for money; his credit was low on this side the water, he therefore wrote to the Provost, to raise him three thousand pounds as soon as possible. The Provost sent him bills for the money, the very next week: this by some months outran so far the other's expectation, (who looked on Andrews as a man of expense,) that it created that attachment, which lasted till his death, and which was, I presume, the price of the Provostship. N.B.—At the hour of one there came on a violent shower of hail, while we were in the Temple Church; which was succeeded by heavy rains, which lasted till near four: the morning haizy, and the evening likewise.

MARCH the 6th. A haizy morning, and a drizzling rain at noon. This day (without seeking it) I saw the king in his chair, coming from Buckingham house to the Palace of St. James. I should have known him from his picture, if I had seen him in Siberia.

The 7th. I went to see Garrick in "Lusignan:" the house was full by five, tho' David appears but in one act. This day was a good one, yet not absolutely without rain. I saw the King and Queen return from an airing in Hyde Park.

The 8th. It rained hard from nine till two o'clock. I spent this day in strolling thro' the town; paid a visit to Tom Orr's in the morning, and after dining alone at Dolly's, I went to the print auction, at the Piazza, Covent Garden, where I was taken in for £1 9*s.* 6*d.* for a book of 80 old heads, and six loose prints, and I deserved it, for not going to view them by daylight, for I took them to be all new. However they are worth the money, for they will sell for double the sum in single prints.

9th. A wet morning, but cleared up in the middle of the day, but again it rained hard at night. I dined this day with my friend T— B—, whose wife is, I think, the ugliest woman I ever beheld, and at least three-score. There dined with us two old maids, her cotemporarys, the sad emblems of a single life, and a rich cit talking vulgar nonsense before dinner, and falling asleep after it; but in the evening, I was fully compensated for this woful set, by the company of a blind man—Stanly, the leader of the Oratorio band in Drury lane. This was a very agreeable person, and comely for a blind man. He sat down to cards after tea, and played with as much ease and quickness as any man I ever saw. He had the cards however marked

by pricks of a pin; I could not from my cursory examination make the key whereby he marked them. A very stormy night,—now near eleven, so that we have not had twenty four hours together fair, since I came to London.

10th. Showery from morn to night. This day I went with my good friend Pierson, and (with Gamble) visited his agreeable sister Suky. Then went to the Museum, and engaged for Monday next at nine o'clock; visited Christie's picture auction, Pallmall, dined at Lowe's Hotel, Covent garden, and went to the Oratorio of "Judas Maccabæus," to see the King and Queen, and there I for the first time fell asleep, except in bed, since I came to London.

11th. It rained incessantly from the hour I awoke, that is, eight, till near twelve, that I went to bed, and how much further that night, I know not. This day I dined with the Club at the British Coffee (house), introduced by my old College friend Day. The President was a Scotch Member of Parliament, Mayne, and the prevalent interest Scottish. They did nothing but praise Macpherson's new history, and decry Johnson and Burke. Day humorously gave money to the waiter, to bring him Johnson's "Taxation no Tyranny." One of them desired him to save himself the expense, for that he should have it from him, and glad that he would take it away, as it was worse than nothing. Another said it was written in Johnson's manner, but worse than usual, for that there was nothing new in it. The President swore that Burke was gone mad, and to prove it adduced this instance, that when the house was obliged, the day or two before, to call him to order, he got up again, and foaming like a stage actor, he said in the

tion was so visible, that he was disgusting; his language poor—his matter borrowed from common place. Talking with Scott and Pierson, they agreed that the lighting of the city lamps cost £2000 a night; and that the paving of Oxford Street cost £40,000 (forty thousand); but in the latter they were misinformed, for Mr. Combe, who was concerned, told me it had not cost quite twenty thousand; but as to the lamps, they spoke partly from knowledge, and partly from calculation.

13th. Rain in the morning, but turned out a fair day. This day I walked with Mr. Scott down the Blackfriar's Road, as far as the Obelisk, to see the *future* city from thence. On my return I saw Viny, the timber vendor, a very curious man, who with great courtesy, explained every thing to us. I regretted that I did not know more of wheel carriages, &c., however, the little I did recollect, made Viny profess that he would do any thing to satisfy me. I bespoke a saddle from his maker, Clarke, upon his construction. I then dined at the Crown and Anchor, in Sussex Street, where we were charged 3*s.* 10*d.* for a pound of cod. It is amazing, the passion our countrymen have, for appearing great in London. This very learned gentleman, Doctor Jackson, methought affected a consequence, from calling for shrimp sauce, while the waiter, (I saw) was laughing at him for his brogue, and appearance. I verily believe that, if a Coleraine man was to come here, he would bespeak nothing but Salmon, merely because it is the most expensive fish in London, though he has it at home for less than a farthing per pound.

14th. The first entire fair day, since I came to London. This day I called at Mr. Thrale's, where I was received with all respect by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. She is a very learned lady, and joyns to the charms of her own sex, the manly understanding of ours. The immensity of the Brewery astonished me. One large house contains, and cannot contain more, only four store vessels, each of which contains fifteen hundred barrels; and in one of which one hundred persons have dined with ease. There are beside in other houses, thirty six of the same construction, but of one half the contents. The reason assigned me that porter is lighter on the stomach than other beer is, that it ferments much more, and is by that means more spiritualised. I was half suffocated by letting in my nose over the working floor, for I cannot call it vessel; its area was much greater than many Irish castles. Dined alone, having refused an invitation from Mr. Boyd, in order to see Garrick, and I saw him, which I could not have done, if I had stayed half an hour longer, the pit being full at the first

rush. Nor was I disappointed in my expectations, tho' I cannot say he came up to what I had heard of him, but all things appear worse for being forestalled by praises. His voice is husky, and his person not near so elegant, as either Dodd's or King's; but then his look, his eye, is very superior. Lear however was not I think a character, wherein he could display himself. King's Copper Captain was nothing like Brown's, yet he was very well in it.

15th. A fair day. Dined with Archdeacon Congreve, to whom Dr. S. Johnson was school-fellow at Litchfield.[1] The Doctor had visited the Archdeacon yesterday, by which accident I learned this circumstance. N.B.—Westminster, round St. John's Church, is generally two stories high, very poor-like and deserted; it seems more wretched than the worst parts of Dublin, yet I have heard Englishmen in Dublin say, that the worst parts of London equalled the best of Dublin. In the evening I went with Dr. Sims, to hear Collins lecture upon Oratory, at the Devil Tavern; and the fellow displayed good enunciation, and good sense. His ridicule of the Scots, Welsh, and Irish, was passing well. Tho' all his observations were from common place, yet the manner they were delivered gave them weight. Speaking of the Preacher who decrys action in the pulpit, I have shewn the sad effects of emphasis misplaced; are we therefore to use no emphasis? and are we not to use action, because action (as I have shewn) may become monstrous, but certainly action is dumb language: else the dumb could not render themselves intelligible, nor could pictures speak. This, by the way, was not the lecturer's obser-

town and country, he could go at any time, and spend a month: he is at this time on these terms at Mr. Thrale's, and he knows how to keep his ground. Talking as we were at tea of the magnitude of the beer vessels, he said there was one thing in Mr. Thrale's house, still more extraordinary; meaning his wife. She gulped the pill very prettily—so much for Baretti! Johnson, you are the very man Lord Chesterfield describes:—a Hottentot indeed, and tho' your abilities are respectable, you never can be respected yourself. He has the aspect of an Idiot, without the faintest ray of sense gleaming from any one feature—with the most awkward garb, and unpowdered grey wig, on one side only of his head—he is for ever dancing the devil's jig, and sometimes he makes the most driveling effort to whistle some thought in his absent paroxisms. He came up to me and took me by the hand, then sat down on a sofa, and mumbled out that he had heard two papers had appeared against him in the course of this week—one of which was—that he was to go to Ireland next summer in order to abuse the hospitality of that place also. His awkwardness at table is just what Chesterfield described, and his roughness of manners kept pace with that. When Mrs. Thrale quoted something from Foster's "Sermons," he flew in a passion and said that Foster was a man of mean ability, and of no original thinking. All which tho' I took to be most true, yet I held it not meet to have it so set down. He said that he looked upon Burke to be the author of Junius, and that though he would not take him *contra mundum*, yet he would take him against any man. Baretti was of the same mind, tho' he mentioned a fact which made against the opinion, which was that a paper having appeared against Junius, on this day, a Junius came out in answer to that the very next, when (every body knew) Burke was in Yorkshire. But all the Juniuses were evidently not written by the same hand. Burke's brother is a good writer, tho' nothing like Edward. The Doctor as he drinks no wine, retired soon after dinner, and Barretti, who I see is a sort of literary toad eater to Johnson, told me that he was a man nowise affected by praise or dispraise, and that the journey to the Hebrides would never have been published but for himself. The Doctor however returned again, and with all the fond anxiety of an author, I saw him cast out all his nets to know the sense of the town about his last pamphlet, "Taxation no Tyranny," which he said did not sell. Mr. Thrale told him such and such members of both houses admired it, and why did you not tell me this, quoth Johnson. Thrale asked him what Sir Joshua Reynolds said of it. Sir Joshua, quoth the Doctor, has not read it. I suppose,



quoth Thrale, he has been very busy of late; no, says the Doctor, but I never look at his pictures, so he wont read my writings. Was this like a man insensible to glory! Thrale then asked him if he had got Miss Reynolds' opinion, for she it seems is a politician; as to that, quoth the Doctor, it is no great matter, for she could not tell after she had read it, on which side of the question Mr. Burke's speech was. N.B.—We had a great deal of conversation about Archdeacon Congreve, who was his class-fellow at Litchfield School. He talked of him as a man of great coldness of mind, who could be two years in London without letting him know it till a few weeks ago, and then apologising by saying, that he did not know where to enquire for him. This plainly raised his indignation, for he swelled to think that his celebrity should not be notorious to every porter in the street. The Archdeacon, he told me, has a sermon upon the nature of moral good and evil, preparing for the press, and should he die before publication, he leaves fifty pounds for that purpose. He said he read some of it to him, but that as he had interrupted him to make some remarks, he hopes never to be troubled with another rehearsal.

17th. Patrick's day, fair—nothing remarkable occurred this day. Dined with Tom Orr, where I met Lisson and other Hibernians. Except the Duke of Leinster's chairmen and beggars, I saw very few people wear Shamrougs. This night for the first time played Loo, and came off a winner.

18th. Showery in the forenoon, and rainy in the afternoon, and now it is pouring at eleven o'clock. In the morning I went to the Tower alone, where I had a contest with one of the red-coats who led me round. . At first he blustered, and talked of taking me to the Constable of the Tower; but, upon my insisting to go there, his crest fell, and he was fain to forego his exaction. This I did merely to try the humour of the people. But people are the same every where, individuals and customs and institutions differ. This night I went to Covent garden, where maugre Mrs. Barry's excellency's, "Edward and Eleonora" went off insipidly. I bought an onyx cameo ring, the device a Madona's head, and the face (happily) white, the rest of a cornelian colour, price two guineas and two shillings.

19th. Hazy all day, interspersed with showers. Breakfasted with Pierson, and took from him a box ticket for Miss Young's benefit on Tuesday night—a place to be kept. I went to St. James's, and saw the King and Queen go to Chappel. There was more pomp than I expected, for among other errors I had imbibed in Ireland, this was one, that the Lord Lieutenant in Ireland appeared in greater display

of state than his Majesty; but the thing is impossible, for I think the Battle axe Guards is all the apparatus of state in Ireland, but the men here dressed in the same uniform with them, whose denomination I forget, are more numerous, and besides the yeomen of the guard, and gentlemen pensioners who line all the avenues from the presence chamber to the Chappel, are more richly dressed than common officers, not to say any thing of the nobility in office, maids of honour, &c. Dined with Lord Dartrey, who lives a l'Anglois, or rather Francois, the cloth not being at all removed, &c. There was the celebrated Mrs. Carter, whom I should not have suspected to be either an authoress or an old maid, for she was an unaffected, plain, well-looking woman, yet they told me she has translated Epictetus, and that her poems are beautiful. There was also Miss Duckworth, who does not accompany Lady Dartrey to Ireland in May. Coming home I steped into St. James's Church, where I saw a grave gentleman—Mr. Parker, reading a lecture on the Catechism out of a book, but whether printed or not, I could not decide. He warned his hearers that the quantity of God's grace communicated did not depend on the quantity of water wherewith the child was besprinkled, for that it was originally immersion, which custom was changed in cold climates, with other wise saws to the like effect. There were about a hundred hearers thinly scattered, and there seemed not one for each candle, and indeed I wonder how any body stayed in the Church. I next stepped into St. Martin's, in the Strand, which I saw lighted up, but I could get no further than the door, such a crowd I never saw under one roof. And wherefore this—why, there was one Harrison (as I learned) in the pulpit, who was the very reverse of the other. No bombast-player in Tom Thumb, or Chrononhoton, &c., ever so roared and so bellowed as he did, and his matter was as lifeless as his manner was hyper-tragic. A man at the door, from whom I learned his name, told me he was a very good liver and a fine preacher, if he had not those ways with him, yet here the poor fellow was deceived, for it was those ways (as he called it) which made him pass for a fine preacher. And this is a strong example, what action in the pulpit can atchieve. When action is blamed, it is incongruous action. For just action is the language of nature. Nothing is worse than false emphasis, yet are we not to use emphasis?

20th. A tolerable day, but showery: walked with Pierson over a great part of the city, which I had not seen, viz.: Moorfields, and Bartholomew's and Christ's Hospital, Bethlehem, &c. Went in the evening to the "Suspicious Husband." Woodward (for whose benefit it

was), holds out wonderfully, he acts with as much spirit as ever, but his looks grow too old for Ranger. The Cataract in the entertainment of the "Druids" was amazingly fine; it was done, I suppose, by means of a wheel. The perspective too of the Piazza, Covent Garden, was excellent.

21st. A sweet, soft, and fair day. Strolled into the Chapter Coffee-house, Ave Mary Lane, which I had heard was remarkable for a large collection of books, and a reading Society. I subscribed a shilling for the right of a year's reading, and found all the new publications I sought, and I believe, what I am told, that all the new books are laid in, some of which, to be sure, may be lost or mislayed. Here I saw a specimen of English freedom, viz., a whitesmith in his apron, and some of his saws under his arm, came in, sat down, and called for his glass of punch and the paper, both which he used with as much ease as a Lord—such a man in Ireland, (and I suppose in France too, or almost any other country) would not have shewn himself with his hat on; nor any way unless sent for by some gentleman: now, really every other person in the room was well dressed.

Pierson dined with me at the Grecian, and we went together to the play, and tho' both dressed we walked, for here it is not indecorous as in Dublin, to wear a hat in the boxes. The play was "Timanthes," very heavy, except the last act. Smith is a mere ape of Barry. Palmer, a fine figure, and strong voice, and if he had an atom of judgment, would be an actor, but he is a wretched mouthing ranter. The farce was the "Irish Widow." Mrs. Greyill was not equal to Mrs.

scholar, and he is now among the first, so that all the scrapers have been Irish, except one, (Earlom) McArdell was the first of his time, then Fry, now Watson, Fisher, Dixon, Burke, &c. quere.

22nd. A fair day. Nothing remarkable.

23rd. Fair also, but rain at night. Dined at the Bedford, where I met Dr. Jackson, lamenting the state of his wife from the case of the Perraus, her brothers. I went to Ranelugh, where there were few ladies, except of pleasure. The room beautiful, and about four times the size of the Rotunda, but Almack's rooms are by far the finest I have yet seen. The ball-room is above 90 by 40, the serpentine wreath round the pillars was prettily painted, and every thing finished in the best manner. The tables were laid out in the rooms under this for supper; the display for the dessert was sumptuous, and in short every thing in the most elegant style. Called on Lord Dacre for Fombell's papers, he asked me to dine. I find the first method of conciliating an Englishman, is to praise England.

24th. A fair day. Called on Mr. Coombe with Dean Woodward's letter, he received me with great courtesy, called also at Dr. Campbell's, but found him not at home. Dined from mere curiosity at a shilling ordinary in the Strand, where I own I was better pleased at the adventure, for such I call it, than anything I saw in London yet. For it exhibited a view of people, who affected somewhat above themselves, better than anything I have seen in real life. The company was mostly Scotch, and they called each other, Colonel, or Captain, or Doctor. There were two or three ——s and an old highland Parson, who, being much of his life abroad, had almost forgot the Erse, and had not learned much English. They talked high of Lords and Lady's and their engagements with them, &c.

25th. Eddying winds in the forenoon, rendered the streets very disagreeable with dust, which was laid in the evening by rain from three. Dined at Mr. Thrale's, where there were ten or more gentlemen, and but one lady besides Mrs. Thrale. The dinner was excellent: first course, soups at head and foot, removed by fish and a saddle of mutton; second course, a fowl they call Galena at head, and a capon larger than some of our Irish turkeys at foot; third course, four different sorts of Ices, Pine-apple, Grape, Raspberry and a fourth; in each remove, there were I think fourteen dishes. The two first courses were served in massy plate. I sat beside Baretti, which was to me the richest part of the entertainment. He and Mr. and Mrs. Thrale joyn'd in expressing to me Dr. Johnson's concern, that he could not give me the meeting that day, but desired that I

should go and see him. Baretti was very humourous about his new publication,[1] which he expects to put out next month. He there introduces a dialogue about Ossian, wherein he ridicules the idea of its double translation into Italian, in hopes, he said, of having it abused by the Scots, which would give it an imprimatur for a second edition, and he had stipulated for twenty five guineas additional if the first should sell in a given time. He repeated to me upon memory, the substance of the letters which passed between Dr. Johnson and Mr. McPherson. The latter tells the Doctor, that neither his age nor infirmity's should protect him if he came in his way. The Doctor responds that no menaces of any rascal should intimidate him from detecting imposture wherever he met it.

26th. Rain in the morning, hail about one, rain at three, and a copious fall of snow at night. This day was the first on which I heard good preaching in England, and indeed Mr. Warner has in my sight redeemed the honour of his nation, for he is positively the best deliverer of a discourse I ever heard. He is the very thing I have often conceived a preacher ought to be, and his manner is what I should have aimed at, had it been my lot to be a preacher in any great city. He does not, as he ought not to, rely on his notes. He makes excursions, and unwritten effusions which prevail over the warmest, the boldest compositions; and then when he hath exhausted such sentiments as present themselves, he returns to his notes, and takes up the next head, according to his preconceived arrangement. By this discreet conduct, he avoids the frozen, beaten track of declamation, and keeps clear of the labyrinth of nonsense into which those



shops for preaching are bought and sold like other warehouses or theatres. N.B. Mr. Combe told me from his own knowledge, that the paving of Oxford Street came but to between nineteen and twenty thousand pounds, for it is current in London that it cost forty thousand.

27th. Frost in the morning, and light falls of snow all day. Went to see Reynolds's pictures. His manner is certainly the true sublime, the colours seem laid on so coarsely that *quivis speret idem*. Gainsborough's I looked at afterwards, but his work seems laboured with small pencils; I dont think he paints as well as Hunter in Dublin. What a pity that Reynolds's colours do not stand, they want body, they seem glazed. Went to the Pantheon in the evening, it is a beautiful room and highly finished, with colours of paste resembling porphiry, or Armagh marble rather; but after all the orchestra seemed by no means of a piece, and awkwardly disposed; the circular not so large as the Rotunda, but with the Piazza it holds more, beside the gallery and great tea room below, equal to the whole area above, and besides the several rooms off it. There was the Prussian Ambassador, a white faced, white haired northern-like man, he had nothing of sensibility in his countenance—Lord Stormont no very sage looking man. The Duke of Cumberland and Lady Grosvenor, a fine woman lost to all sense of modesty, met over and over, and looked away from each other. Lord Lyttleton a mean looking person, but of no mean understanding. Lady Archer painted like a doll, but handsome, her feathers nodded like the plumes of Mambrino's helmet. There seem to be fewer ugly women among the English than the Irish, but I cannot say they are more handsome. Lady Townshend was by most people reckoned the handsomest woman there, but if Lady Grosvenor was modest, and her complexion natural, she would be my beauty. They say she has Lord Hinchinbroke. The singing by the Italian woman, who is handsome and of expressive gesticulation, was beyond any thing I could conceive in the compass of a voice. Garrick was there, and by no means that well limbed man I have heard him cryed up for, but his eye is excellence. N.B. I forgot to set down an article of the day, I dined last at Thrale's. Barretti complained that Major Vallancy had treated him ill in his discourse on the antiquity of the Irish language, by saying that he had misrepresented the copy he gave of Biscayan Pater-noster, for says he, I quote one, he quotes another, and a fifth might be quoted all different from each other, now says he, I could not misrepresent, for I could not understand, and the fact is, I did not misrepresent, for I can produce the book from whence I quoted.

28th. The coldest day I felt this season, rain, hail, snow, and sleet. Dined with Lord Lucas, and I cannot help remarking how similar all the great dinners I have met with are, the soup, fish, and saddle of mutton, turkey and pidgeons, &c.; second course: ices and fruits, dessert. He affects knowledge particularly of antiquity. Here dined the man from whom I conjecture Foote drew his Cadwallader, if he is not the original, he certainly is like Foote's Cadwallader, his name is something like Cousbei or ——. N.B. The two Ropers, and the wife to one of them. A pint of claret I think, was not consumed. Here as almost every where else in England, I found a strong partiality in favour of their own country; the intense coldness of the day, gave occasion to talk of the weather, and it was agreed that Paris had sometimes as bad, a lady bridling herself said "every one allows that we have every thing better than the French except climate, and I, who have spent much of my time in Paris, think that we have even a better climate."

A few days ago, in a large company, it was argued that Englishmen had no right to talk so loud in favour of liberty, as they enslaved without mercy the blacks abroad. A young man in a passion exclaimed, that God Almighty had made them slaves, for they were black, flat-nosed, and negros, and then concluded with *Old England for ever.*

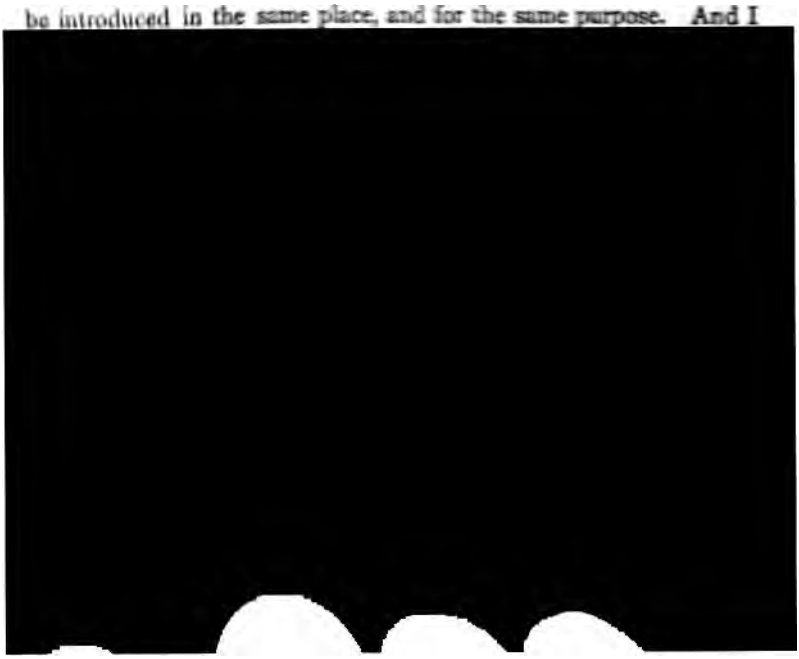
29th. Intensely cold, the streets were white with snow about twelve o'clock, which soon melted and the snow came on again at five. N.B. Iconi, for which I paid two pounds five and sixpence, is but one pound seven in the Catalogue here.

lature, forasmuch as all power originates in the people, and is only delegated to a few for the good of the whole. This is the limit of their power, and whenever that is overleaped, the supremacy reverts to the people, they are *ipso facto* invested with the right of resistance, for would it not be absurd to suppose that fourteen millions of people should be a sacrifice to one thousand. The parallel too between the American assemblys, and the parish vestry's doth not apply, for many reasons, but principally for this, that the assemblys cannot of themselves legislate, the concurrence of the Crown is necessary, but with this consent an act of assembly becomes a law binding upon that province, but this is not the case with the vestry. The distinction of actual and virtual representation is sophistical, for representation is a right appendant, not to persons, but things, *id est*, property; so that American property can neither be actually or virtually represented in a British parlement. Besides, there is this to be said for a British parlement taxing all the people of Britain, whether represented or not; the Commons lay no greater burdens upon the shoulders of others, than on their own, they pay every tax in common with every other subject; whereas the British parlement would share none of the load laid on America, and therefore, could not sympathise with it in its sufferings therefrom, and consequently its taxation is in *equity*, incompetent. It is also in *justice*, for the American Charters granted by the several English Kings, were either with or without the consent of parlement, if the former be the case, then the Charters have all the qualities of a law; if the latter, (without the express consent) still they had the tacit consent, and consequently the British parlement, acquiescing so long under the Americans being governed by their own laws, yields a prescriptive right, which they cannot now in justice invalidate.

April 1st. A fair day, dined at Mr. Thrale's, whom in proof of the magnitude of London, I cannot help remarking, no coachman, and this is the third I have called, could find without enquiry. But of this by the way. There was Murphy, Boswell, and Baretti, the two last, as I learned just before I entered, are mortal foes, so much so that Murphy and Mrs. Thrale agreed that Boswell expressed a desire that Baretti should be hanged upon that unfortunate affair of his killing, &c. Upon this hint, I went and without any sagacity, it was easily discernable, for upon Baretti's entering, Boswell did not rise, and upon Baretti's descry of Boswell, he grinned a perturbed glance. Politeness however smooths the most hostile brows, and theirs were smoothed. Johnson was the subject, both before and after dinner,

[redacted] of all but myself that under that roof were the [redacted] friends. His bon mots were retailed in such plenty, that [redacted], could not live upon my memory. Boswell saying [redacted] in a cheerful glass, admired the maxim in true terms. [redacted] Johnson, 'and what does unless a man has lived a life' [redacted] urged that it made a man forget all his cares. 'that, to be [redacted] Johnson 'might be of use if a man sat by such a person [redacted] Boswell confessed that he liked a glass of whiskey in the highland tour, and used to take it 'at length says Johnson, 'let me [redacted] wherein the *pleasure* of a Scotsman consists,' and so tips off a bumper of whiskey. But Johnson's abstemiousness is new to him, for within a few years he would swallow two bottles of Port without any apparent alteration. and once in the company with whom I dined this day, he said 'pray Mr Thrale give us another bottle.' It is ridiculous to pry so nearly into the movements of such men, yet Boswell carries it to a degree of superstition. The Doctor it appears has a custom of putting the rind of oranges into his pocket, and he asked the Doctor what use he made of them. the Doctor's reply was, that his dearest friend should not know that. This has made poor Boswell unhappy. and I verily think he is as anxious to know the secret as a green sick girl. N.B. The book wherewith Johnson presented the highland lady was Fenelon's Archimedes.

Dr Johnson calls the art in 'Irene' with the monk, paralytick on one side, *i.e.*, the monk is introduced without any notification of his character, so that any other monk or any other person might as well be introduced in the same place, and for the same purpose. And I



April 2nd. Fair. I went to the Chapel Roy[illegible] Bishop of Bangor preach. His subject was *on the* [illegible] *ments*, &c. His object was to prove that piety and [illegible]e went [illegible]d in hand, and could not exist separately. His proofs were tak[illegible]it, from the state of paganism, whereas the theology was more or less refined, so was their morality more or less pure, and from experience of persons whose virtuous qualities were generally adequate to their notions of the Divinity; then he showed the inefficacy of the motives from the fitness of things, or the beauty of virtue, and so resolved all into the will of God. He touched upon the folly of enthusiasm, and instanced the violence of the Fanaticks in the last century, to impress a sense of the error of religion consisting merely in devotion; then he glanced at the licentious reign which followed; then ended abruptly by saying that this was neither time nor place for discussing that matter. N.B. The Bishop of London read the communion service, but not according to the rubric, for at the *let us pray*, after the commandments, he did not turn round to the communion table. In the evening I went to St. Martin's, in hopes of hearing Harrison, and the Church was very full, from the same expectations; but we were all disappointed, for Dr. Scott, (Anti-Sejanus) mounted the pulpit, and as I could not well hear him, tho' just behind the pulpit, I went off to St. Stephen's, Wallbrook, not for the purpose of hearing, for I knew not who was to be there, but of seeing the Church, which is reckoned the handsomest in the world. They tell the following story of it, that Lord Burlington, who was the patron of architecture, saw in Italy a Church which he so admired and bepraised, that he got drawings made of it as the *chef d'œuvre* of human skill, but being told that it was a copy from Sir C. Wren's Wallbrook, he could not believe it, till he examined it; and what is very remarkable, they add, that coming late into London, he drove there directly, and viewed it by candle light. This is the story in London, but as Sir Christopher stole his plan of St. Paul's from St. Peter's, why may it not be expected that the Italian Church is the original and not the copy. It revolts against the *costume*, that an Italian Architect would borrow models from London. N.B. Lazarus is a good text for a sermon on the immortality of the soul, forasmuch as the only moral proof of it arises from the sufferings of the good, and the enjoyments of the wicked in this life.

April 3rd. Fair. I went to the British Museum. The sight was so various, that it is hard to remember any thing distinctly, but what pleased me most was the ruins of Herculaneum. The original Magna

Chair of King John was in the Hardcian, I think. The shell for which a Cardinal gave five hundred pounds, I would be sorry to give five pence for, unless merely because it is a specimen of human folly. The magnitude of the crocodile (twenty feet) and the horn (five feet in length, growing out of the nose of the unicorn fish, were extraordinary to me. The form of the pulpits was curious. A cylindrical form with spiral geometrical stairs issuing from the centre upright. This evening I sketched out a letter on the method to read the Liturgy.

N.B. The transparent picture of Vesuvius, in the last eruption from the side, done by direction of Sir Wm. Hamilton, was very well.

April 4th. A drizzling rain from ten to four. I went to the House of Lords, on the Montague appeal and heard Lords Mansfield, Camden, and the great lawyers at the bar. This night I finished my address to the Clergy on the Liturgy.

April 5th. Dined with Dilly in the Poultry, as guest to Mr. Boswell, where I met Dr. Johnson, (and a Mr. Miller, who lives near Bath, who is a dilletanti man, keeps a weekly day for the Litterati, and is himself so litterate, that he gathereth all the flowers that ladies write, and bindeth into a garland, but enough of him) with several others, particularly a Mr. Scott, who seems to be a very sensible plain man. The Doctor, when I came in, had an answer, titled "Taxation and Tyranny" to his last pamphlet, in his hand. He laughed at it, and said he would read no more of it, for that it paid him compliments, but gave him no information. He asked if



thought pleased him, and as I sat next him, I had a fine opportunity of attending to his phiz; and I could clearly see he was fond of having his quaint things laughed at, and they (without any force) gratified my propensity to affuse grinning. Mr. Dilly led him to give his opinion of men and things, of which he is very free, and Dilly will probably retail them all. Talking of the Scotch, (after Boswell was gone) he said, though they were not a learned nation, yet they were far removed from ignorance. Learning was new among them, and he doubted not but they would in time be a learned people, for they were a fine, bold, enterprising people. He compared England and Scotland to two lions, the one saturated[1] with his belly full, and the other prowling for prey. But the test he offered to prove that Scotland, tho' it had learning enough for common life, yet had not sufficient for the dignity of literature, was, that he defied any one to produce a classical book, written in Scotland since Buchannan. Robertson, he said, used pretty words, but he liked Hume better, and neither of them would he allow to be more to Clarendon, than a rat to a cat. "A Scotch Surgeon" says he "may have more learning than an English one, and all Scotland could not muster learning enough for Louth's prelections." Turning to me, he said, "you have produced classical writers and scholars; I do'nt know," says he, "that any man is before Usher as a scholar, unless it may be Selden, and you have a philosopher, Boyle, and you have Swift and Congreve, but the latter," says he, "denied you;" and he might have added the former too. He then said, you certainly have a turn for the drama, for you have Southerne and Farquhar and Congreve, and many living authors and players. Encouraged by this, I went back to assert the genius of Ireland in old times, and ventured to say that the first professors of Oxford and Paris, &c., &c., were Irish. "Sir," says he, "I believe there is something in what you say, and I am content with it, *since they are not Scotch.* This day I went to Guildhall, and waited for above an hour before the Lord Mayor came. He, Wilkes, was rather worse than I expected to find him, for he labours under baldness, increpitude, and want of teeth; from the hedge of the teeth being removed, his tongue is for ever trespassing upon his lips, whereof the undermost, together with the chin, projects very far. He went to the front of the Hustings, where he was clapped as a player more than once before he spoke, tho' I was removed from him but the breadth of the *green* table, I could not make out all he said, (which was not much, but it was) in reprobating the measures of the Ministry towards the Ame-

[1] satiated?

ricans. He then sat down, and Captain Allen, after making a speech too trivial for a mountebank, yet he too was applauded, read the address, petition, and remonstrance, which will be in the prints. Talking of Addison's timidity keeping him down so that he never spoke in the House of Commons was, he said, much more blameworthy, than if he had attempted and failed, as a man is more praiseworthy who fights and is beaten, than he who runs away.

April 6th. Light showers, dined with Lord Dartrey, who promised to print Swift's letter next week. I went in the evening to the Italian Opera in the Haymarket, for Lestini's benefit. An Italian Opera is not so absurd an entertainment as I expected, for it is nearly as intelligible as if it were in English, considering the inarticulation of the words by the singers. The grand absurdity lies against an Opera at large, *i.e.* an attempt to express the passions by singing, and yet the action of Italian performers is so just, that their language of dumb show would be intelligible without the aid of song. However this was the first, and it shall be the last sacrifice I shall make of sense to sound.

April 7th. Cold in the morning, with some rain, but it turned out a fine day. I went down to Greenwich, and viewed the Hospital, and the outside of Flamstead's Observatory, the inside not being to be seen without some special order, on account of some thefts committed. I walked from thence to Woolwich, and viewed the Dock yard, particularly a seventy four gun ship not finished, which is truly a monstrous vessel. In the Warren, as it is called, I saw great number of cannon and bombs piled up in huge pyramids and prisms, large as Irish turf stacks. This is a poor place, as I suppose all places must be that depend on letting lodgings. The prospect from King John's palace, (as they call it) about midway between Greenwich and Woolwich, was fine, the bow of the river bending in a sweet curve.

N.B. There were hawthorn trees in Greenwich Park almost full in leaf, as they were quite green. There were others however not so forward, apple trees in full blossom.

April 8th. Very cold, and some rain, but not enough to allay the blowing of the dust. Dined with Thrale,[1] where Dr. Johnson was, and Boswell, (and Baretti as usual.) The Doctor was not in as good spirits as he was at Dilly's. He had supped the night before with Lady —— Miss Jeffry's, one of the maids of honour, Sir Joshua Reynolds, &c., at Mrs. Abington's. He said Sir C. Thompson, and some others who were there, spoke like people who had seen good

[1] Life, vol. ii., p. 178.

company, and so did Mrs. Abington herself, who could not have seen good company. He seems fond of Boswell, and yet he is always abusing the Scots before him, by way of joke, talking of their nationality, he said they were not singular; the Negros and Jews being so too. Boswell lamented there was no good map of Scotland. "There never can be a good (map) of Scotland," says the Doctor sententiously. This excited Boswell to ask wherefore. "Why Sir, to measure land, a man must go over it; but who could think of going over Scotland."[1] When Dr. Goldsmith was mentioned, and Dr. Percy's intention of writing his life, he expressed his approbation strongly, adding that Goldsmith was the best writer he ever knew, upon every subject he wrote upon. He said that Kendric had borrowed all his dictionary from him. "Why," says Boswell, "every man who writes a dictionary must borrow." "No Sir," says Johnson, "that is not necessary." "Why," says Boswell, "have not you a great deal in common with those who wrote before you," "Yes Sir," says Johnson, "I have the words, but my business was not to make words but to explain them." Talking of Garrick and Barry, he said he always abused Garrick himself, but when anybody else did so, he fought for the dog like a tiger; as to Barry, he said he supposed he could not read. "And how does he get his part?" says one, "Why, somebody reads it to him, and yet I know," says he, "that he is very much admired." Mrs. Thrale then took him by repeating a repartee of Murphy, the setting Barry up in competition with Garrick, is what irritates the English Criticks, and Murphy standing up for Barry. Johnson said that he was fit for nothing but to stand at an auction room door with his pole. Murphy said that Garrick would do the business as well, and pick the people's pockets at the same time. Johnson admitted the fact, but said, Murphy spoke nonsense, for that people's pockets were not picked at the door,[2] but in the room; then said I, he was worse than the pick-pockets, forasmuch as he was Pandar to them, this went off with a laugh. *Vive la bagatelle.* It was a case decided here, that there was no harm, and much pleasure in laughing at our absent friends, and I own, if the character is not damaged, I can see no injury done.

APRIL 9th. A fair day, went to St. Clements to hear Mr. Burrows, so cried up by Lord Dartrey, preach, but I was wofully disappointed; his matter is cold, his manner hot, his voice weak, and his action affected. Indeed I thought he preached from a printed book, a book it certainly was, and it seemed at my distance, which was the

[1] Life, vol. ii., p. 184. [2] Life, vol. ii., p. 178.

perpendicular to the side of the pulpit, to have a broad margin-like print, and he did not seem master of it, yet he affected much emphasis and action. Dined with Mr. Combe, and spent the evening with Dr. Campbell.

APRIL 10th. Rain, but not enough to soften the asperity of the weather. Dined with General Oglethorpe,[1] who was in lieu of Aid-de-Camp, (for he had no such officer about him) to Prince Eugene, and celebrated by Mr. Pope. Dr. Johnson pressed him to write his life;[2] adding, that no life in Europe was so well worth recording. The old man excused himself, saying the life of a private man was not worthy public notice. He however desired Boswell to bring him some good Almanack, that he might recollect dates, and seemed to excuse himself also on the article of incapacity, but Boswell desired him only to furnish the skeleton, and that Dr. Johnson would supply bones and sinews. "He would be a good Doctor" says the General, "who would do that." "Well," says I, "he is a good Doctor," at which he, the Doctor, laughed very heartily. Talking of America, it was observed that his works would not be admired there. "No," says Boswell, "we shall soon hear of his being hung in effigy." "I should be glad of that," says the Doctor, "that would be a new source of fame;" alluding to some conversation on the fulness of his fame which had gone before. And says Boswell, "I wonder he has not been hung in effigy from the Hebrides to England." "I shall suffer them to do it corporeally," says the Doctor, "if they can find me a tree to do it upon."

The Poem of the Graces became the topic: Boswell asked if he

sake, and the Doctor said that some cases were more excusable than others, but if it were excusable, it should be the last resource; "for instance," says he, "if a man is distressed in circumstances, (as in the case I mentioned of Denny) he ought to fly his country." "How can he fly," says Boswell, "if he has wife and children?" "What Sir," says the Doctor, shaking his head as if to promote the fermentation of his wit, "doth not a man fly from his wife and children if he murders himself?"

APRIL 11th. Fair from ten, bought ——, &c. Supped with Mr. Crawford at the Adelphi, where, except a Dr. Wilkinson, the company was all Irish, and with the burning zeal of their country, violent patriots in their own opinion.

APRIL 12th. Fair; went to Kensington, where the ground is in many places so bad, that the trees were stunted and ranpiked, as they call it in Ireland. Dined with Mosse and Rose at the Exchange Coffee House, where things were dear and bad.

13th. Fair and cold. Went to see the King proceed from St. James's, to give the Royal Assent to the Restraining Bill.[1] Strolled with Mosse.

14th. Fair. Good Friday; went to hear Dr. Dodd, who is cryed up as the first preacher in London, at his own Chapel. He reads better than he preaches; for in the pulpit he leans too much upon his notes, his eyes are seldom off them, yet he uses the action of an extempore delivery, which makes a jarring jumble. His manner is infinitely superior to his matter, which was a poor and unsuccessful attempt upon the passions. He said the merits of Christ were applied to us, just as a man's paying a money debt for another was deemed a discharge for the debt, and he said that as the merits of Christ extended from the rising up of the sun to the going down of the same, so they extended equally *a parte ante et post* since creation, to those who never heard the name; *i.e.*, Jesus Christ was a vicarious sacrifice as well for those who lived before him, as those who have lived since; and as well for those who never heard of him, as those who have faith in his name.

N.B. The shops were not shut up to-day, farther than that some of them had a single board standing up. The paviours went on as all other workmen did, and the ladies went to their exercise in Hyde

[1] This was the bill to restrain the trade and commerce of the colonies of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina to any part of Great Britain, Ireland, and the West India Islands, April 13, 1775. Annual Register, p. 107.—*Editor.*



Park as usual. N.B. Dodd did not read the Communion service rubrically, for he kneeled at the beginning, and tho' it was a fast day, he and his coadjutors wore surplices. Supped with Jack Day, and a set of Irish.

April 15. Heavy rain till twelve, yet without softening the asperity of the weather.

April 16th. Rain till nine. The weather softer, but boisterous still. Went to hear Harrison, at Brompton Chapel, his discourse incoherent, and delivered in the *gout* of a spouter. It is ridiculous in these fellows, whose eyes are scarce ever off their book, to affect the animation of extemporaneous warmth, yet this man's composition inclined to vehemence. Talking of the corruption of the present times, he said Christians professed a creed indeed, but acted as if they had no belief, they offered a public sacrifice as on this day, yet they lived as if they sacrificed to the Devil. His text was, Romans, vi., 5. Dined with Archdeacon Congreve, my Lord Primate came there in the evening. He asked me sneeringly if I had seen the lions. I told him I had neither seen them nor the crown, nor the jewels, nor the whispering gallery at St. Paul's. The conversation turned upon other things, and came round to his picture by Reynolds, which led on talk of Sir Joshua and other great artists, and without any force, I introduced something of Johnson. "What" says he, "do you know him?" "Yes my Lord I do, and Barretti, and several others, whom I have been fortunate enough to find willing to extend my acquaintance among their friends, for these, my Lord, were the lions I came to see in London." "Aye," says he, "these indeed are lions worth seeing, and the sight of them may be of use to you." He soon after talked to me if my brother were not Curate to Dr. Bissett, and whether he was not contemporary with Scott, whom he looked upon, he said, as a friend to the Clergy. He asked me if somebody else had not spoke to him about my brother. I mentioned Lord Chief Justice Patterson. He spoke in such a way, that I take it in my head, he will do something for him out of this living of Donaghmore.

April 17th. Showery, yet the air not yet softened. Disappointed of a ticket for the Lord Mayor's Ball.

18th. Went in one of the Brentford coaches to Kew Bridge, walked from thence along the Thames, (N.B.—A smart shower then) to Richmond, near which I met the King with a single gentleman, and two of the Princes. I did not know him till I was check for jowl with him, (jowl here I apply to his Majesty) and then I took off my hat; sometime before I met the King I overtook a boy of fifteen or

sixteen, dressed in flannel, or something of that sort. I asked him several questions, to all which he answered with English curtness, he was however glad of a penny for carrying my coat. After passing the King I asked him if he knew who that was, he answered in the negative. I then told him, that is the king; he showed no emotion, but turned round and said leisurely, "Is that the King?" An Irish boy would have dogged him at the heels as long as he could. It would be heresy here to deny that Richmond Hill afforded the finest prospect in the world, and it would be false to deny that it afforded a rich one, yet it has nothing picturesque to be seen from it, for it wants the second and third distances. Wales is the fertile mother of landscapes. N.B.—Richmond Hill is very coarse ground, covered with furze and rushes.

APRIL 19th. Tho' it rained heavily last night, the cold nothing abated, but rather increased. Showery in the forenoon, and a most severe fall of hail at two o'clock; dined as Boyd's.

April 20th. Fair, and somewhat softened by the fall of hail yesterday. Dined at Thrale's with Dr. Johnson, Barretti, and a Dean Wetherall of Oxford, who is soliciting for a riding house at Oxford. When I mentioned to the Doctor another answer, entitled "Resistance *no* Rebellion," coming out, he said, "that is the seventh, the author finds the other six will not do, and I foresee that the title is the best part of the book." He desired that I should visit him. N.B. Talking after dinner of the measures he would pursue with the Americans, he said the first thing he would do, would be to quarter the army on the citys, and if any refused free quarters, he would pull down that person's house, if it was joyned to other houses, but would burn it if it stood alone. This and other schemes he proposed in the manuscript of "Taxation no Tyranny," but these, he said, the Ministry expunged.

APRIL 21st. Fair, but cold; went with Mosse and Weld to Lord Chesterfield's, and the Duke of Bedford's. There is nothing in the latter worth looking at, but in Lord Chesterfield's everything is admirable. That elegance, of which his Lordship was such an advocate, and so shining an example, pervades the whole. The staircase, noble, and of the finest white marble. The rooms highly finished, and rather beautiful than magnificent. The effect of looking glass panels, placed opposite to the windows of the musick room, was admirable; it apparently doubled the real dimension, and gave a sweet reflected view of Stanhope Street and Hyde Park. There was a Madona and sleeping Christ, from Guido, admirable, and finely copyed by a master whom I



forget. There was also a good Rubens, the subject, "Joseph, Virgin, and Child." Dined as umbra to Weld and Mosse with a citizen, but I'll do so no more, for there is no entertainment but meat and drink with that class of people.

APRIL 22nd. Rainy morning, the air still harsh, showery the rest of the day. Went to Cheltsea, and saw the Hospital, and tho' I had been at Ranelagh Garden, I did not know it was at Cheltsea.

23rd. Rainy almost all day, hail and thunder about three at Hampton Court. The gardens must hurt any delicate feelings with their semi-circular fish pond on the bank of the Thames. The Palace presents two suits of rooms, in which are exhibited a few good pictures, (William the 3rd, by Godfrey Kneller; the Spanish Embassadors, &c.,) among several ordinary things, some choice tapestrys, viz., the battles of Alexander from Le Brun, and Diogenes in his tub visited by Alexander, from Salvator Rosa; the Hampton Court Beauties, by Kneller, &c.

24th. Rainy morning. Sat an hour with Dr. Johnson about noon. He was at breakfast with a Pindar in his hand, and after saluting me with great cordiality, he, after whistling in his way over Pindar, layed the book down, and then told me he had seen my Lord Primate at Sir Joshua's, and "I believe," says he, "I have not recommended myself much to him, for I differed widely in opinions from him, yet I hear he is doing good things in Ireland." I mentioned Skelton to him as a man of strong imagination, and told him the story of his selling his library for the support of the poor. He seemed much affected by it, and then fell a rowling and muttering to himself, and I could hear him plainly say after several minutes pause from conversation, "Skelton is a great good man." He then said, "I purpose reading his 'Ophiomachis,' for I have never seen anything of his, but some allegoric pieces which I thought very well of." He told me he had seen Delany when he was in every sense *gravis annis*, "but he was [an] able man," says he, "his 'Revelation examined with candour' was well received, and I have seen an introductory preface to a second edition of one of his books, which was the finest thing I ever read in the declamatory way." He asked me whether Clayton was an English or Irish man. "He endeavoured to raise a hissy among you," says he, "but without effect I believe." I told him one effect in the case of the parish clerks. His indignation was prodigious. "Aye," says he, "these are the effects of heretical notions upon vulgar minds."

25th. Fair and softer. Dined in Nicholas Lane, Lombard Street, with Mr. Portis, an Irishman, who gave plenty of claret.

26th. Warm, viewed the exhibition by the artists, in the Strand, which is far inferior to that by the Royal Academy, Pallmall, in every thing, even in landskips and horses.

27th. Warm, or rather hot to the degree of astonishment with the folks here. Re-visited the exhibition of the Royal Academy, and am confirmed in my opinion of the *grand manner* of Barry's "Venus lamenting over Adonis." Barret's landskips had escaped me on Tuesday, but they are superlative; Ashford copys and rivals Roberts. Dined at Mr. Weld's, Clements' Inn, where I for the first time saw Kelly the Poet, obstinately refused to go with Day to the masquerade, took leave, &c.

28th. Fair, and extremely hot for the season; set off at six from the New Church, Strand. Met several returning from the masquerade, and a lady who had been there, came piping hot in the machine to near Newbery or Spinomland, in Berkshire, where we lay, and near that town I saw turf bog, and turf cut thereon. N.B.—I saw turf also at Reading, where we dined. The country is very rich from London to this place, viz., Spinomland, yet it is so level that there is scarce a good prospect the whole way, unless Cleveden, near Maidenhead bridge, may be so called. Quere, is this place the *proud alcove* of Shrewsbury and love?

29th. Fair, but not so warm as yesterday, unless perhaps the bleakness of Marlborough Downs communicated itself to the air. From near Newbury to near Cottenham, a space of near thirty miles, the country is very bare of trees and herbage, it is the worst land I have seen in England, and it is certainly fuller of beggars; for miles together the coach was pursued by them, from two to nine at a time, almost all of them children. They are more importunate than in Ireland, or even Wales.

30th. Heavy rain in the morning. Went to the Abbey Church, and heard a sorry discourse wretchedly delivered. Went to the Pump Room, where I met Lady Molyneux, who asked me to dinner, where I spent the pleasantest day since I came to England; for there were five or six lively Irish girls who sung and danced, and did every thing but ——. Women are certainly more envious than men, or at least they discover it upon more trifling occasions, and they cannot bear with patience that one of their party should obtain a preference of attention; this was thoroughly exemplified this day, one of these who was a pretty little coquet, went home after dinner to dress for

the rooms, and her colour was certainly altered on returning for tea; they all fell into a titter, and one of them (who was herself painted as I conceived,) cryed out, "heavens, look at her cheeks." If she blushed it could not be seen, but all her varnishing was to no purpose, for she met not that admiration she expected, and she came back to supper so cross and peevish, that there was no speaking to her now, as after dinner. She sung a song of Cupid knocking at the door, which was as chaste in the language as it was bawdy in the idea, and the *truckle bed* is not more so, and though the girls, and even matrons, were kicking with laughter, she sung on with such a composed gravity, as is the just character of true humour. It is amazing what pleasure women find in kissing each other, for they do smack astonishingly.

MAY 1st. Fair, I believe, tho' I heard there was rain. I went to Spring Gardens in the morning, and to the ball at the new rooms in the evening. It was very splendid, for the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland were expected, but the Duke having sprained his leg at the last did not come, but there was the Duke and Duchess of Grafton, and Lady Georgina Fitz Roy, so like the pictures of Charles the 2nd, that every body cognised the likeness, when I pointed it out to them. Lord Mahon and his Lady, Lord Chatham's daughter. The beauties were Miss Haywood, the most exquisitely pretty, for a fair complexion I ever saw. She saw me admire, and she would even come and sit beside me, yet so innocently sweet was her manner, that it seemed angelic. Miss Wroughton, that I think is the name, was rather the brunette

seems, poor woman, oppressed with affliction. Dined with Larman, where I met a Mr. Goddard, a country clergyman, very like Dean Langton, who would scarce believe me that I was an Irishman; and in the evening I walked with him to see the baths, hospital, Minerva's head, &c., which he was desirous I should see before I left Bath. I find it would be an easy matter to scrape up acquaintances enow here, for I was asked to dinner for the whole week, so that I was nearly tempted to stay for at least another week.

MAY 3rd. A very light rain about eight o'clock; came to Bristol, from thence to the Hot Wells. The waters have little of the mineral taste, and nothing so warm as those of Bath. By the way, Bath itself is not so strong, at least of the sulphur, as Bellnassuttock or Swadlinbar; but Clifton, and about the Well is romantically pretty for England, all of which, except about Bath and Bristol are quite level. Around Bath are much steeper hills than about Ballynure, but the hills and the valleys also are much larger. The steeples of Bristol are elegant, modern, gothic. The cloysters round the College, *i.e.*, I suppose the Collegiate Church (now the Cathedral,) are in part remaining, and the College gate is in grand style. College Green is pleasant, and the view of Clifton and the environs is very fine, but not in so superlative a degree as I have heard represented.

MAY 4th. Set off from Bristol; the morning so foggy I could not see the country till we came to Newport, the breakfast stage. The country from thence to Gloucester is a cold, wet, clay, almost all under grazing, and tho' well planted, yet it is a dreary tract, with few houses, and those like waste offices: but from Gloucester to Tewksbury the looks of the country improve; and from Tewkesbury to Worcester is by far the most beautiful I have seen in England. It is not like the country round London, a dead flat; nor like that round Bath, all hill and dale; but there is a wide plain along the banks of that fine river the Severn, and rising hills interspersed, till at length the prospect terminates in mountains of a very varied outline, so that here we have the first, second, and third distances, essential to all first rate landskips. Worcester is a pleasant looking town, or rather city, with twelve or thirteen churches, besides the meeting houses of non-conformists. Here is a great manufactory of gloves, and another of carpeting; it seems a thriving town, not like Gloucester, which is evidently declining; there being therein but six churches now, whereas there were once twelve, but the Cathedral or College as they call it, is magnificently beautiful; the gothic ornaments are of the airiest sort, but if it be the lightest church without, it is the heaviest



within, I ever saw; the cylindrical pillars in the body of the church, are massive beyond all proportion. I cannot close this day's article, without observing, that the city of Bristol afforded fewer pretty women than I could have expected, nay, in truth, they all seemed rather ordinary; whereas in Tewksbury and Worcester the people are in general comely, they nearest answer the descriptions Mr. Addison, or any other fond Englishman, gives of his own country. Here also I observe the greatest (indeed the only) courtesy I have met from the vermin of Inns, all which however, I attribute to the army which constantly lyes here, and to the officers who (I see) frequent this house. The tone of servitude was here so submissive, so unlike England, and so like Ireland, that I was driven to account for it in the manner I have done, like causes, like effects. N.B.—At Bristol this morning, when a passenger made to go into the coach, the boot-catch took a hold of the man's hand, saying, you sha'nt open that door; then he leaned his back against the door, telling him he must wait till the clock hath struck four.

May 5th. Rain from about seven, and after twelve came on very heavy. The country from Worcester, beautiful, with neat improvements, and swelling grounds for seventeen or eighteen miles, then it becomes heathy, and afterwards very coarse, till near Bermingham.

N.B.—The borough of Witch is one of the great manufactorys for salt in England; they pay three shillings and four pence per bushel, duty, and sell at three and sixpence, but three pence a bushel is allowed for prompt payment; and N.B.—Baskerville, the Printer, was originally a little schoolmaster at Worcester, then turned painter, type-founder, and printer. He was a professed disbeliever of a future state, and ordered himself to be buried under a mill he had built; a few days before he died a dissenting clergyman visited [him]: Baskerville told him he was glad to see him, ordered him wine, &c., "but," says he, "let me not hear of your d——d stuff of prayers and the other world, and that sort of nonsense." The country between Bermingham and Litchfield, the worst I have yet seen in England, it is bare, naked, and of shallow soil, not so hilly as the County Cavan, but almost as bad, near Litchfield it improves.

May 6th. Fair, but excessively cold. Staffordshire, from Litchfield about sixteen miles, a pleasant gravelly and hilly country, the most populous I have yet seen, from thence it becomes heathy. Cheshire, near Chester, a good and populous country.

7th. Cold, and rainy in the evening. Heard a good sermon in the

Choir of the Cathedral, and in the evening in the Parish Church, expected the Preacher would have begun to spell.

8th. Small rain in the evening. At Conway, where the cooking was execrable. Here, as in every other part of Wales, few of the natives can speak English; the women wear hats like men's, and all the young ones have ruddy complexions, but not clear, the blood being broke in the cheeks. The Fingallians are most undoubtedly originated from Wales, for they have a family likeness.

9th. Rain in the morning, dined at Widow Knowles in Gwinda, where every thing was better than I met in any other part of England, and the Hostess herself discovered such a goodness of mind, that she redeems in my thoughts the character of Publican.

* * * * *

In October, 1776, I went the second time to London, to publish the "The Philosophical Survey," I staid there till May, 1777.

* * * * *

Again I went there in May, 1781, to look for some preferment for my nephew, Tom Campbell, and that worthy man, Mr. Alexander Scott, of James Street, Bedford Row, procured him a cadet's place in the East India Company's service. I staid but a fortnight or so in London. * * * *

JUNE 11th, 1781. I went to see Dr. Johnson, found him alone, Barretti came soon after.[1] Barretti (after some pause in conversation) asked me, if the *disturbances* were over in Ireland. I told him I had not heard of any disturbances there. "What," says he, "have you not been up in arms?" "Yes, and a great number of men continue so to be." "And dont you call that disturbance?" returned Barretti. "No," said I, "the Irish volunteers have demeaned themselves very peaceably, and instead of disturbing the peace of the country, have contributed much to its preservation." The Doctor, who had been long silent, turned a sharp ear to what I was saying, and with vehemence said, "What Sir, dont you call it disturbance to oppose legal government with arms in your hands, and compel it to make laws in your favour? Sir, I call it rebellion; rebellion as much as the rebellions of Scotland." "Doctor," said I, "I am sorry to hear that fall from you, I must however say that the Irish consider themselves as the most loyal of His Majesty's subjects, at the same that they firmly deny any allegiance to a British Parliament. They have a separate Legislature, and that they have never showed any inclination

[1] See the account of this conversation, pages 336-8 of Dr. Campbell's Strictures on the History of Ireland. London, 1790.—*Editor.*

to resist." "Sir," says the Doctor, "you do owe allegiance to the British Parliament as a *conquered* nation, and had I been Minister I would have made you submit to it. I would have done as Oliver Cromwell did; I would have burned your cities, and wasted you in the fires (or flames) of them." I, after allowing the Doctor to vent his indignation upon Ireland, cooly replyed, "Doctor, the times are altered, and I dont find that you have succeeded so well in burning the cities, and roasting the inhabitants of America," "Sir," says he gravely, and with a less vehement tone, "what you say is true, the times are altered, for power is now nowhere, we live under a government of influence, not of power; but Sir, had we treated the Americans as we ought, and as they deserved, we should have at once razed all their towns, —— and let them enjoy their forests, ——." After this wild rant, argument would but have enraged him, I therefore let him vibrate into calmness, then turning round to me, he, with a smile, says, "After all Sir, though I hold the Irish to be rebels, I dont think they have been so very wrong, but you know that you compelled our Parliament, by force of arms, to pass an act in your favour. That, I call rebellion." "But Doctor," said I, "did the Irish claim anything that ought not to have been granted, though they had not made the claim." "Sir, I wont dispute that matter with you, but what I insist upon is, that the mode of requisition was rebellious." "Well Doctor, let me ask you but one question, and I shall ask you no more on this subject, do you think that Ireland would have obtained what it has got, by any other means?" "Sir," says he candidly, "I believe it would not. However, a wise government should not grant even a claim of justice, if an attempt is made to extort it by force." I said no more.

* * * * *

My fourth excursion to London, I made in October, 1786, to learn the sense of the booksellers in regard to my intended History of the Revolutions of Ireland. I found little encouragement in point of profit, as all expressed a fear of enterprising in Irish affairs, for two reasons, the first was, that whatever is published in London respecting that country is immediately published in Dublin, and Ireland should be the principal market for Irish Histories; but the other and principal discouragement was this, so many paltry productions had of late appeared on the subject as to give the public a distrust of any new publication on the same subject, till its merit could be decidedly ascertained. O'Halloran prejudiced one, Crawford another, and Vallancy all. However, after a fortnight or three weeks stay there, I set out with Sir Capel Molyneux to the North, in his way to Ireland, in-

tending to return to London, to be more explicit with the booksellers or one of them, as to the immediate publication of a first volume, which I thought was ready, but having some conversation with Mr. Thorkelin the Icelander, relative to some disputed points of the most remote antiquity, relative to which he promised to procure me certain documents from Denmark; and ruminating on the propriety or impropriety of publishing one volume alone, which would have reached only to Henry 7th. I no sooner found myself in Edinburgh, than I resolved to return home with the worthy Baronet, though I had left all my papers in London, so that my progress was interrupted.

N.B.—In the interim, I built the gallery in the Church, out of the fifty pounds which I gave out of my own pocket, to encourage the parish to raise one hundred pounds to roof and repair the Church.

* * * * *

I say my work, that is, the History, was interrupted all this while, I therefore set out a fifth time for London, after Whitsuntide 1787, and after a short stay there, I visited Paris.

Paris was new to me, and therefore and because it was otherwise so worthy of recollection, I now make a few cursory remarks upon it. Calais seemed to me a new world, in the persons and manners of the people, yet there, and in Boulogne there was a greater conformity with England, than in the other parts of France. The impressions, at first made upon me, were against the nation I was in, and so they continued till I was above a week in Paris, but there I every day began to like more and more the faces of the people in their public walks, &c. The shops, carriages, &c. were disgusting, but France does not value itself for commerce. I came into Paris on Sunday, and was surprised to see the people at work every where; the masons, carpenters, stone cutters, &c., &c., yet I never saw so much devotion as in their Churches. The Palaces, Churches, and some other public buildings, particularly the *Hal du Ble*, are magnificent. The Chapel of the Virgin in the Church of St. Sulpice, far above the force of my imagination. No wonder that the devotees there kissed the ground on their departure from it; it was heaven upon earth in miniature: the Dome of the Invalid's fine and grand, but in the former respect not to be compared to this inimitable *morceau*. The *Hal du Ble* is forty yards, or a hundred and twenty feet, under the cupola, besides the concentrical exterior area in Colonnade, this should have been the model for our Rotunda. St. Eustace comes next to St. Sulpice, the view of the East window through the high altar is so solemn as to impress devotion. On a view of St. Sulpice the ceiling appeared to me



too low, and as it wanted the Gothic ramification to give it lightness, it might have appeared heavy to me, even if it had been high enough; but the Chapel of St. Mary, the more I saw it, the more I liked it, it is the most happy combination of architecture, sculpture, and painting, *decies repetita placebat*, it never lost its enchantment, it enwrapped me each time more and more, and made me almost pardon the idolatries of popery. The Notre Dame is a magnificent pile, from the steeple, Paris does not appear to me half as large, (that is, not to cover half the ground,) as London does from St. Paul's, but then the houses in Paris are twice as high as those in London, and the streets appear more populous. The dome and Church in the Sorbonne, built by Cardinal Richlieu, is well worth seeing, not only for the Cardinal's monument of parian marble in the centre of the Choir, with his statue in a recumbent posture, his beautiful niece in the character of Religion supporting his head, and Science weeping at his feet with her book cast aside, but for the statues of the four Evangelists and the twelve Apostles; the pictures but middling.

On Sunday the 22nd of July, I went to the anniversary celebration of St. James's day, at his Church *of the Bucheries*. High Mass is mere mummery, the musick was said to be fine, but I dont understand musick. The mode of collecting the alms alone struck me, and was indeed a reflected image of the despotism, the superstition, and the gallantry of the nation. The Swiss Halberdier struck the ground every now and then with his halbert, to make way for a clerical-like person, who led in his hand a beautiful little girl, who carried a scrip or bag to receive the alms. The Swiss commanded awe, the gownsman reminded you to contribute, and the pretty female by her looks, told you, "sure! you cant refuse."

On Tuesday the 24th. I went to the Parliament house with Mr. Blakeway, and after waiting four hours and more, saw what? why, Monsieur, Count D'Artois, Bishop of Paris, &c., come out after their deliberations on the remonstrance against Stamp Duty.

Wednesday the 25th. Went to Versailles with Mr. Smyth; was much disappointed at the sight of the palace, the outside is great, but not magnificent: and the inside tawdry, not beautiful; the gardens in the old square style, thickly studded with statues. The only thing in true style was the grotto of Louis 14th, where he is represented in the character of Apollo coming out of the bath, attended by six nymphs, with his horses in two caves on each side that large one, wherein was the group of the vain monarch, in the character of a god,

and under whose statue in the Place de Victorine, is the inscription *viro immortali.*

On Monday, July the 30th, between eleven and twelve o'clock, I left Paris. At eight next day I got to Rouen, when I spent two hours viewing the cathedral, tombs, &c., and during that interval became acquainted with Mr. Sturgeon, husband to Lady Harriet Wentworth. He shewed me much affection as a countryman, and especially as he knew my brother. He told me that specimens of English cotton fabricks had been intermixed with French, and submitted to the inspection of certain officers in Rouen, whose business it is to estimate their value, and fix their price; and that these officers not suspecting them to be English, rated them at twenty per cent. above the French. When this took wind, it gave a dreadful alarm to the Normans. N.B.—The churches of Amiens and Rouen, especially the former, should detain the traveller.

On Wednesday the 1st of August, about one o'clock I found myself at Brighthelmston, so that in little more than forty eight hours, I passed from Paris to Brighton. That night, (viz., Wednesday) I went to the ball with Sir Boyle Roach, where there was but a small party, but these mostly of the princes of Britain and France, viz., the Prince of Wales, Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, the Princess of Lambal, who (it is said) was married, (and but for a few months) to the son of the Duke of Penthievre, whose daughter is now married to the Duke of Orleans. In her suite were three French ladies of quality. Besides these recited, were the Duke of Bedford, Duke of Queensbury, and other Nobles, particularly Lords Maynard and Clermont. Lest it should be forgotten, I set it down, that when I came into the room, Mrs. Fitzherbert sat in the highest seat at the top of the room with the Duke of Cumberland. The Prince was standing in the circle of ladies * * * the Duchess of Rutland was by far the fairest of the fair. Mrs. Fitzherbert did not dance the first set, but the second she danced with Isaac Corry, and after dancing down, she sat down with her partner, and in a few minutes the Prince and the Duke of Cumberland came and sat beside her. The Prince expressed affection in his looks, and the Duke esteem. She discovers strong sensibility and considerable dignity in her countenance and deportment. The general appearance of the English was to my eye, fresh from Paris, what it never before had been, strangely awkward and clownish at this ball. The French deserve most rightly that character of pre-eminent politeness which they have universally obtained. I never saw an awkward person in France, even in the lowest depart-



ment. They are on the whole a strange but agreeable mixture of pomp and beggary; the latter is visible in every avenue of Versailles, even in the Palace. I listened in the street to a woman who sang ballads, with the assistance of her husband's tambour, with more pleasure than I ever did at Ranelagh, Vauxhall, or the Rotunda. The French language and musick seem adapted to engage the heart in small matters.

But to return to Brighton, it was irritating to my feelings to see C. Fox walking on the Steyne on Thursday night, with a vulgar looking ——; with Lord Clermont and the first of nobility, (viz., the Duke of Bedford) sneaking along with this profligate head of opposition. No wonder that the Duke of Bedford should glory in a like practice, and that Lord Maynard should not only glory in his gilded horn, but that he should serve as pimp to this Duke of fifty thousand a year. This is scarce worthy notice, but upon the whole I must observe, that according to the impressions made upon me in this short excursion, the two countries bear an exact image of the government in each. In England the laws are made by the people, and therefore they are there for the people, and their interests. In France the people are only considered as if made for the use of the Court of Versailles and City of Paris, and therefore the people of France do not reflect that image of happiness which the English nation does in every quarter, and yet it is said that the English are less happy than the French; now, though I dont believe this, yet it possibly may be the case, for the English are so pampered by a redundance of meat and money, that they may be said at all times to be under a plethora of both, and therefore may not enjoy that happiness which is within their reach. The laws too being made by and for them (as I have observed) gives them frequent advantages on trials by jury, over their superiors in rank, which renders them rough and savage in their manners, and like children wilful, peevish, and discontented, repining at their own inferiority of condition, and of course unhappy in their stations, not considering that an equality of ranks is incompatible with any form of society ever yet established, which verifies the French maxim, "Tout chose a le bon et le mal."

I have thought that if the persons and things of both countries be supposed to be divided into ten classes, there will be found in France one class of these to be so superior to any thing of the kind in England, as to have no parallel there, another class may be found in both countries perfectly on *par;* but that the remaining eight classes in the lower walks of life will be found every way superior in England.

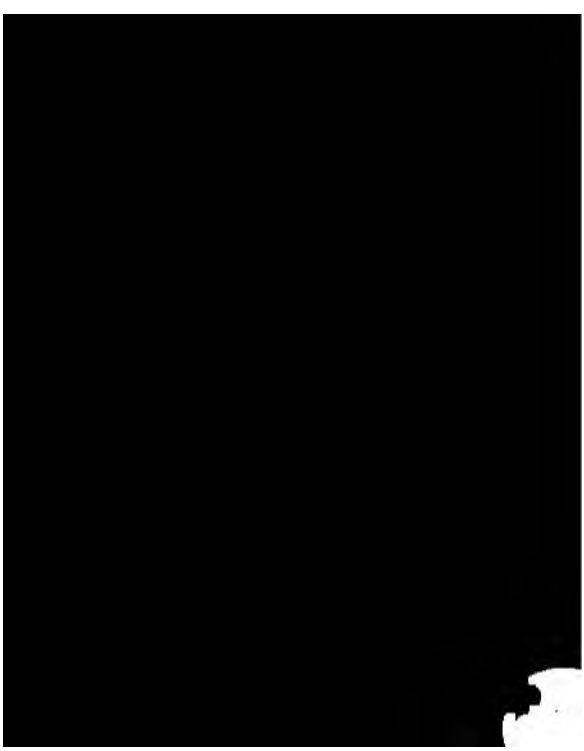
That is to say among the mass of the people which I count as eight, the whole advantage as to the means of the comforts and conveniences of life lie on the side of the English—and to explain myself as to that highest rank in France, for which I say England can produce no parallel, I instance in the pomp of a court the elegance of mind and manners prevalent among the highest orders in France, the general refinement among the more numerous orders of clergy and lawyers, the unrivalled accomplishments of the female sex, which more than compensates for that beauty of person which distinguishes English ladies, but which is rarely embellished by that expressive eye and those acquired accomplishments which characterize the French ladies and place them not only above competition in the present age, but challenge antiquity to produce any thing equal to them. N.B.—I speak of classes of persons and things, not of individuals, England may and I doubt not does produce individuals equal to any in any other country, but elegance (I dont mean cleanliness on which the English pride themselves) of ranks is not as yet to be found in England. The gentry are cold, lifeless and reserved, the *mauvaise honte* is still prevalent among them. They may perhaps in general see what is decc rous in behaviour, but they have not acquired the habits of it, of this they are conscious, and therefore they are generally stiff if not awkward in their carriage, and always afraid of being incorrect they seldom arrive at excellence in the exhibition of those good qualities which they frequently possess. The French most richly deserve that character of superlative politeness which they have obtained, the disposition of their government has contributed to it, they are compelled to restrain those ebulitions of passion which sometimes disfigure the behaviour of a free people, and this general awe with which they are impressed, smooths the purturbations of the mind and disposes the people to suavity of demeanour and to those resources from the anguish of thought upon public affairs, which are only to be found in the mutual endearments of private society.

My sixth visit to England was in the end of the year, 1789, with Dr. Hales and his sisters, spent my Christmas in Bath, went up to London the night before the Queen's birthday, when I had my pocket picked of twelve and a half guineas, my Sardonix ring, and the medal of the King of Morocco, which Colonel Valancy called the Talisman.

My seventh visit to England was in consequence of a wish expressed by the Bishop of Dromore that I should meet him there, and bring with me the Life of Dr. Goldsmith, which I had compiled from

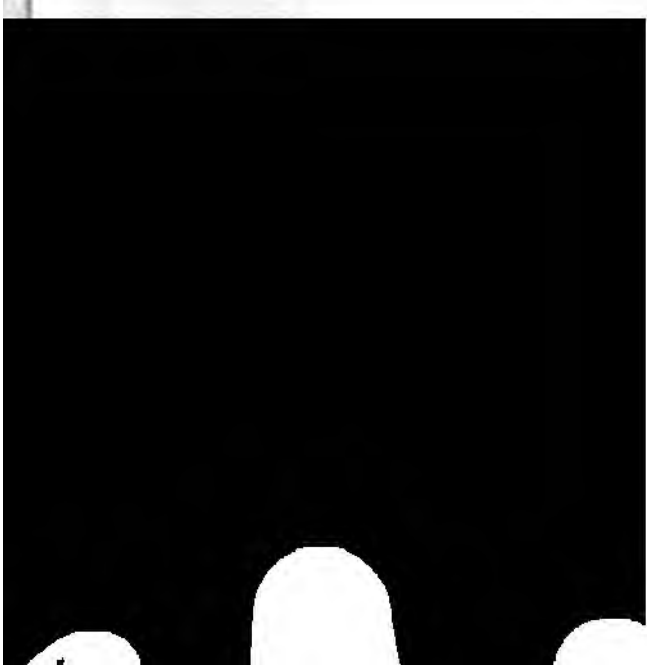


[illegible] him that it might be pu
[illegible] benefit of his brothers, (part
[illegible] getting subscriptions be
[illegible] the 20th February, 17
[illegible] it is that on the 27th, t
[illegible] house in Dublin was burned,
[illegible] the 5th March we set out for L
[illegible], and on Saturday morning the
[illegible] the next day, I heard Mr. Kirwa
[illegible] before the Lord Lieutenant in th
[illegible] his discourse was, the influence of the
stations upon the law. The Preacher pointed alm
the Chief Governor, and even mimicked his awka
ridiculed his mode of spending his time. After
recapitulated what he had said on the baleful ex
stations in the country, and then turning to the g
Excellency sat, he said, "I ask you what example
this country," and after a long pause he repeated, '
examples do you in high stations set to the people of





EXTRACTS RELATING TO JOHN
THE LIFE AND CORRESPON
OF MRS. HANNAH MOR





EXTRACTS RELATING TO JOHNSON, FROM THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE OF MRS. HANNAH MORE.[1]

THE desire she had long felt to see Dr. Johnson, was speedily gratified. Her first introduction to him took place at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who prepared her, as he handed her up stairs, for the possibility of his being in one of his moods of sadness and silence.

She was surprised at his coming to meet her as she entered the room, with good humour in his countenance, and a macaw of Sir Joshua's in his hand; and still more, at his accosting her with a verse from a Morning Hymn which she had written at the desire of Sir James Stonehouse. In the same pleasant humour he continued the whole of the evening. Some extracts from the letters of one of her sprightly sisters, to the family at home, will afford the best picture of the intercourse and scenes in which Hannah was now beginning to bear a part.

MISS SARAH MORE TO HER SISTER (p. 49).

London, 1774.

We have paid another visit to Miss Reynolds. She had sent to engage Dr. Percy (Percy's collection,—now you know him,) quite a sprightly modern, instead of a rusty antique, as I expected. He was no sooner gone, than the most amiable and obliging of women (Miss Reynolds,) ordered the coach, to take us to Dr. Johnson's *very own house;* yes, Abyssinia's Johnson! Dictionary Johnson! Rambler's, Idler's, and Irene's Johnson! Can you picture to yourself the palpi-

[1] From the Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More, by William Roberts, Esq. London: 1834. Vol. i., p. 48, *et seq.*

tation of our hearts as we approached his mansion. The conversation turned upon a new work of his, just going to the press (the Tour to the Hebrides,) and his old friend Richardson. Mrs. Williams, the blind poet, who lives with him, was introduced to us. She is engaging in her manners; her conversation lively and entertaining. Miss Reynolds told the doctor of all our rapturous exclamations on the road. He shook his scientific head at Hannah, and said, "She was a *silly thing*." When our visit was ended, he called for his hat, (as it rained) to attend us down a very long entry to our coach, and not Rasselas could have acquitted himself more *en cavalier*. We are engaged with him at Sir Joshua's, Wednesday evening. What do you think of us?

I forgot to mention, that not finding Johnson in his little parlour when we came in, Hannah seated herself in his great chair, hoping to catch a little ray of his genius; when he heard it, he laughed heartily, and told her it was a chair on which he never sat. He said it reminded him of Boswell and himself when they stopt a night at the spot (as they imagined) where the Weird Sisters appeared to Macbeth: the idea so worked upon their enthusiasm, that it quite deprived them of rest: however, they learnt, the next morning, to their mortification, that they had been deceived, and were quite in another part of the country.

Johnson afterwards mentioned to Miss Reynolds how much he had been touched with the enthusiasm which was visible in the whole manner of the young authoress, and which was evidently genuine and unaffected.

MISS SARAH MORE TO HER SISTER (p. 54).

London, 1775.

Tuesday evening we drank tea at Sir Joshua's, with Dr. Johnson. Hannah is certainly a great favourite. She was placed next him, and they had the entire conversation to themselves. They were both in remarkably high spirits; it was certainly her lucky night! I never heard her say so many good things. The old genius was extremely jocular, and the young one very pleasant. You would have imagined we had been at some comedy had you heard our peals of laughter. They, indeed, tried which could "pepper the highest," and it is not clear to me that the lexicographer was really the highest seasoner.

* * * * * *



MRS. HANNAH MORE TO HER SISTER.

London, 1776.

I had the happiness to carry Dr. Johnson home from Hill Street, though Mrs. Montagu publicly declared she did not think it prudent to trust us together, with such a declared affection on both sides. She said she was afraid of a Scotch elopement. He has invited himself to drink tea with us to-morrow, that we may read Sir Eldred together. I shall not tell you what he said of it, but to me the best part of his flattery was, that he repeats all the best stanzas by heart, with the energy, though not with the grace of a Garrick.

* * * * * *

We got home in time: I hardly ever spent an evening more pleasantly or profitably. Johnson, full of wisdom and piety, was very communicative. To enjoy Dr. Johnson perfectly, one must have him to oneself, as he seldom cares to speak in mixed parties. Our tea was not over till nine, we then fell upon Sir Eldred: he read both poems through, suggested some little alterations in the first, and did me the honour to write one whole stanza;[1] but in the Rock, he has not altered a word. Though only a tea-visit, he staid with us till twelve.

MISS SARAH MORE TO HER SISTER (p. 67).

London, 1776.

Dr. Johnson and Hannah, last night, had a violent quarrel, till at length laughter ran so high on all sides, that argument was confounded in noise; the gallant youth, at one in the morning, set us down at our lodgings.

* * * * * *

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO HER SISTER (p. 68).

London, 1776.

At six, I begged leave to come home, as I expected my *petite assemblée* a little after seven. Mrs. Garrick offered me all her fine things, but, as I hate admixtures of finery and meanness, I refused

[1] This stanza begins "My scorn has oft," &c.

every thing except a little cream, and a few sorts of cakes. They came at seven. The *dramatis personæ* were, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, and Miss Reynolds; my beaux were Dr. Johnson, Dean Tucker, and last, but not least in our love, David Garrick. You know that wherever Johnson is, the confinement to the tea-table is rather a durable situation; and it was an hour and a half before I got my enlargement. However, my ears were opened, though my tongue was locked, and they all stayed till near eleven.

Garrick was the very soul of the company, and I never saw Johnson in such perfect good humour. Sally knows we have often heard that one can never properly enjoy the company of these two unless they are together. There is great truth in this remark; for after the Dean and Mrs. Boscawen (who were the only strangers) were withdrawn, and the rest stood up to go, Johnson and Garrick began a close encounter, telling old stories, "e'en from their boyish days," at Lichfield. We all stood round them above an hour, laughing in defiance of every rule of decorum and Chesterfield. I believe we should not have thought of sitting down or of parting, had not an impertinent watchman been saucily vociferous. Johnson outstaid them all, and sat with me half an hour.

* * * * * *

London, 1776.

Did I ever tell you what Dr. Johnson said to me of my friend the Dean of Gloucester? I asked him what he thought of him. His answer was *verbatim* as follows; "I look upon the Dean of Gloucester to be one of the few excellent writers of this period. I differ from him in opinion, and have expressed that difference in my writings; but I hope what I wrote did not indicate what I did not feel, for I felt no acrimony. No person, however learned, can read his writings without improvement. He is sure to find something he did not know before." I told him the Dean did not value himself on elegance of style.[1] He said he knew nobody whose style was more perspicuous, manly, and vigorous, or better suited to his subject. I was not a little pleased with this tribute to the worthy Dean's merit, from such

[1] Hannah More having once asked the Dean, Whether it might not be advisable to polish his style rather more? "Oh, no," he replied, "they don't expect a fine style from me. All that I care for are the authenticity of my facts, and the truth of my principles." He never failed to communicate his political pamphlets to her; and when she represented to him that such subjects were out of the reach of her comprehension, he would answer, "Pish! no such thing! common sense will ever appeal to common sense."



a judge of merit; that man, too, professedly differing from him in opinion.

* * * * * *

Adelphi, 1776.

Did I tell you we had a very agreeable day at Mrs. Boscawen's? I like Mr. Berenger[1] prodigiously. I met the Bunbury family at Sir Joshua's. Mr. Boswell (Corsican Boswell) was here last night; he is a very agreeable good-natured man; he perfectly adores Johnson; they have this day set out together for Oxford, Lichfield, &c. that the Doctor may take leave of all his old friends and acquaintances, previous to his great expedition across the Alps. I lament his undertaking such a journey at his time of life, with beginning infirmities; I hope he will not leave his bones on classic ground.

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO HER SISTER (p. 168).

London, 1780.

I spent a very comfortable day yesterday with Miss Reynolds; only Dr. Johnson, and Mrs. Williams and myself. He is in but poor health, but his mind has lost nothing of its vigour. He never opens his mouth but one learns something; one is sure either of hearing a new idea, or an old one expressed in an original manner. We did not part till eleven. He scolded me heartily, as usual, when I differed from him in opinion, and, as usual, laughed when I flattered him. I was very bold in combatting some of his darling prejudices: nay, I ventured to defend one or two of the Puritans, whom I forced him to allow to be good men, and good writers. He said he was not angry with me at all for liking Baxter. He liked him himself; "but then," said he, "Baxter was bred up in the establishment, and would have died in it, if he could have got the living of Kidderminster. He was a very good man." Here he was wrong; for Baxter was offered a bishoprick after the restoration.

I never saw Johnson really angry with me but once; and his displeasure did him so much honour that I loved him the better for it. I alluded rather flippantly, I fear, to some witty passage in "Tom Jones:" he replied, "I am shocked to hear you quote from so vicious a book. I am sorry to hear you have read it: a confession which no modest lady should ever make. I scarcely know a more corrupt

[1] Richard Berenger, Esq., many years Gentleman of the Horse and Equerry to his late Majesty. He wrote a history of Horsemanship.

work." I thanked him for his correction; assured him I thought full as ill of it now as he did, and had only read it at an age when I was more subject to be caught by the wit, than able to discern the mischief. Of "Joseph Andrews" I declared my decided abhorrence. He went so far as to refuse to Fielding the great talents which are ascribed to him, and broke out into a noble panegyric on his competitor, Richardson; who, he said, was as superior to him in talents as in virtue; and whom he pronounced to be the greatest genius that had shed its lustre on this path of literature.

* * * * * *

Instead of going to Audley Street, where I was invited, I went to Mrs. Reynolds's, and sat for my picture. Just as she began to paint, in came Dr. Johnson, who staid the whole time, and said good things by way of making me look well. I did not forget to ask him for a page for your memorandum book,[1] and he promised to write, but said you ought to be contented with a quotation; this however, I told him you would not accept.

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO HER SISTER (p. 212).

London, 1781.

We begin now to be a little cheerful at home, and to have our small parties. One such we have just had, and the day and evening turned out very pleasant. Johnson was in full song, and I quarrelled with him sadly. I accused him of not having done justice to the "Allegro," and "Penseroso." He spoke disparagingly of both. I praised Lycidas, which he absolutely abused, adding, "if Milton had not written the 'Paradise Lost,' he would have only ranked among the minor poets: he was a Phidias that could cut a Colossus out of a rock, but could not cut heads out of cherry stones."[2]

Boswell brought to my mind the whole of a very mirthful conversation at dear Mrs. Garrick's, and my being made by Sir William Forbes, the umpire in a trial of skill between Garrick and Boswell, which could most nearly imitate Dr. Johnson's manner. I remember I gave it for Boswell in familiar conversation, and for Garrick in reciting poetry.

* * * * * *

[1] A collection of autographs of eminent persons which her sister was making at that time.

[2] This has probably been recorded in his Life, but is given here as being written on the day on which, and by the person to whom, it was said.

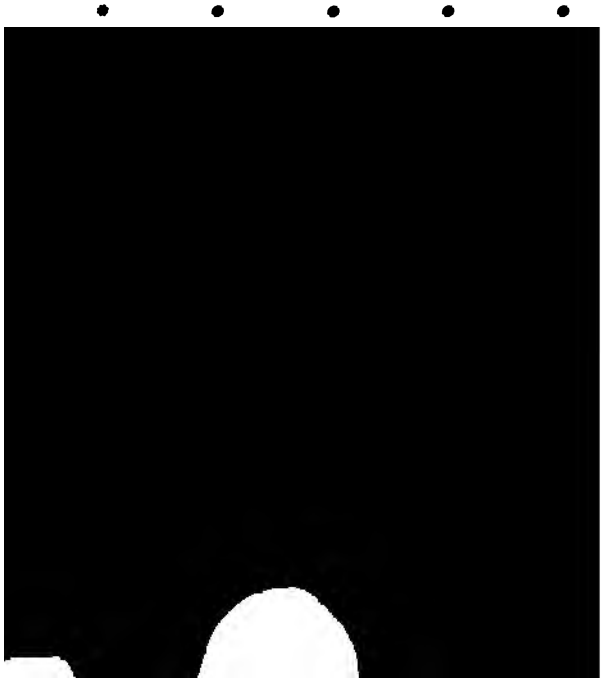


MRS. HANNAH MORE.

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO HER SIST

Poor Johnson is in a bad state of health; I fear h
broken up: I am quite grieved at it, he will m
defender of religion and virtue beyond him, and t
touch of tenderness which I heard of him last night
Turk's Head Club, endears him to me exceedin
always a great many candidates ready, when any va
that club, and it requires no small interest and i
elected; but upon Garrick's death, when number
were made to succeed him, Johnson was deaf to th
No, there never could be found any successor worth
and he insisted upon it there should be a year's v
club, before they thought of a new election. In J
contrarieties very harmoniously meet; if he has too
the opinions of others, and too little patience with
has the greatest tenderness for their persons. He s
day, he hated to hear people whine about metaph
when there was so much want and hunger in the wo
I supposed then he never wept at any tragedy bu
who had died for want of a loaf. He called me a si
not deny the inference.

* * * * *







[illegible] Johnson [illegible]
carried me, and we [illegible] a very long visit.
the greatest modesty and attention, and as to
flattery I ever received from everybody together
his wife. He said, sir I sincerely ask you d
for I am ashamed of writing a note to you;—
name a query that might not be put to ev
magic tree I used, all this from Johnson
given: I told him I was delighted at his appr
quite characteristical, "And so you may, for I
of a man who does not rate his judgment in the
can tell you."

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO HER SI

Han

Poor dear Johnson! he is past all hope. Th
him to the point of death; his legs are scarified
I have, however, the comfort to hear that his di
great measure subdued; and now he says "the
past." He sent the other day for Sir Joshua; a
conversation told him he had three favours to
hoped he would not refuse a dying friend, be th

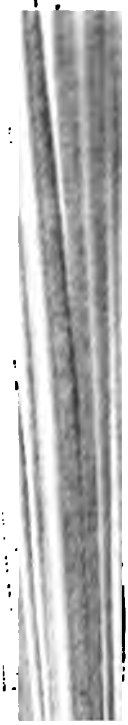
had lent him, as he wanted to leave them to a distressed family; the third was that he would read the bible whenever he had an opportunity; and that he would never omit it on a Sunday. There was no difficulty but upon the *first* point; but at length Sir Joshua promised to gratify him in all. How delighted should I be to hear the dying discourse of this great and good man, especially now that faith has subdued his fears. I wish I could see him.

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO HER SISTER (p. 392).

Hampton, 1785.

Mr. Pepys wrote me a very kind letter on the death of Johnson, thinking I should be impatient to hear something relating to his last hours. Dr. Brocklesby, his physician, was with him: he said to him a little before he died, "Doctor, you are a worthy man, and my friend, but I am afraid you are not a Christian! What can I do better for you than offer up, in your presence, a prayer to the great God, that you may become a Christian in my sense of the word?" Instantly he fell on his knees, and put up a fervent prayer: when he got up he caught hold of his hand with great eagerness, and cried, "Doctor! you do not say, Amen!" The doctor looked foolish; but after a pause, cried, Amen! Johnson said, "My dear doctor, believe a dying man, there is no salvation but in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Go home, write down my prayer, and every word I have said, and bring it me to-morrow." Brocklesby did so.

A friend desired he would make his will; and as Hume, in his last moments, had made an impious declaration of his opinions, he thought it might tend to counteract the poison, if Johnson would make a public confession of his faith in his will. He said he would, seized the pen with great earnestness, and asked, what was the usual form of beginning a will? His friend told him. After the usual forms he wrote, "I offer up my soul to the great and merciful God; I offer it full of pollution, but in full assurance that it will be cleansed in the blood of my Redeemer." And for some time he wrote on with the same vigour and spirit as if he had been in perfect health. When he expressed some of his former dread of dying, Sir John said, "If you, Doctor, have these fears, what is to become of others?" "Oh! Sir," said he, "I have written piously, it is true; but I have lived too much like other men." It was a consolation to him, however, in his last hours, that he had never written in derogation of religion or



were [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] a deal for singu[illegible]
acute, however characteristically rough. Whe
introduced to him, upon the Abbé's advancing
Doctor drew back, and put his hands behind
replied to the expostulation of a friend—"Sir,
with an infidel!" At another time, I remem
did not think the Dean of Derry a very agree
made no answer; and on my repeating my q
he, "I will not speak any thing in favour of
please you, nor any one else."

(Page 403.)

Boswell tells me he is printing *anecdotes* of
but, as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyra*
tenderness for our virtuous and most revered
begged he would mitigate some of his asperitie
"He would not cut off his claws, nor make a
anybody." It will, I doubt not, be a very amu
not an indiscreet one; he has great enthusiasm

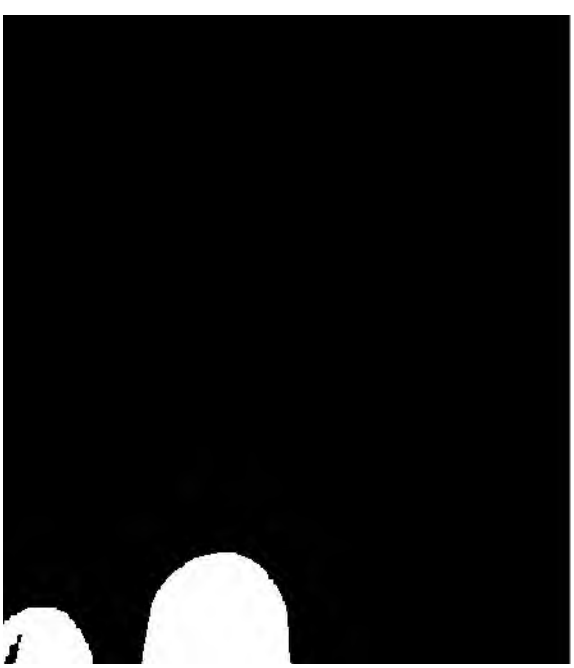




EXTRACTS RELATING TO J(

FROM THE

DIARY AND LETTERS OF D'ARBLAY.







EXTRACTS RELATING TO JOHNSC
DIARY AND LETTERS OF
D'ARBLAY. (LOND. COLBURN

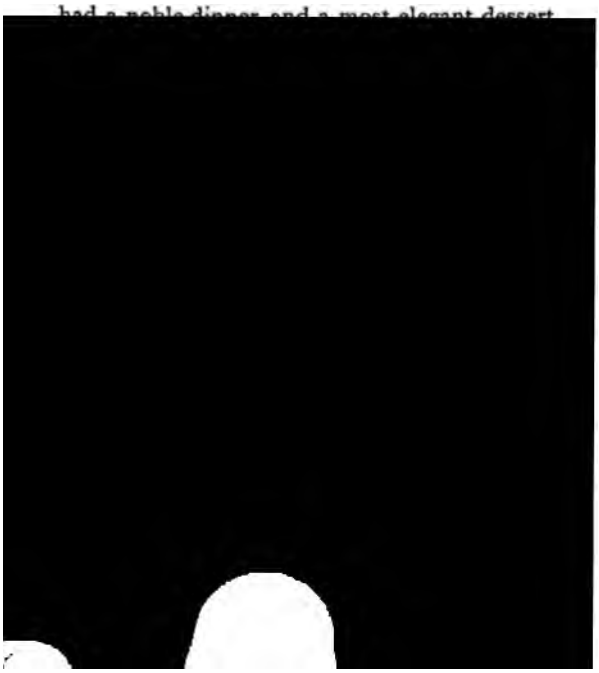
(*Vol. I., page* 38.)

WHEN we were summoned to dinner, Mr
father and me sit on each side of her. I
did not take Dr. Johnson's place;—for he had n

"No," answered Mrs. Thrale, "he will sit by y
will give him great pleasure."

Soon after we were seated, this great man ente
veneration for him, that the very sight of him i
light and reverence, notwithstanding the cruel int
is subject; for he has almost perpetual convulsiv
of his hands, lips, feet, or knees, and sometimes

Mrs. Thrale introduced me to him, and he t
had a noble dinner and a most elegant dessert



"But some people," said Mr. Seward, "are old and young at the same time, for they wear so well that they never look old."

"No, sir, no," cried the doctor, laughing; "that never yet was; you might as well say they are at the same time tall and short. I remember an epitaph to that purpose, which is in ——"

(I have quite forgot what,—and also the name it was made upon, but the rest I recollect exactly:)

"—————— lies buried here;
So early wise, so lasting fair,
That none, unless her years you told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old."

Mrs. Thrale then repeated some lines in French, and Dr. Johnson some more in Latin. An epilogue of Mr. Garrick's to "Bonduca" was then mentioned, and Dr. Johnson said it was a miserable performance, and everybody agreed it was the worst he had ever made.

"And yet," said Mr. Seward, "it has been very much admired; but it is in praise of English valour, and so I suppose the subject made it popular."

"I don't know, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "anything about the subject, for I could not read on till I came to it; I got through half a dozen lines, but I could observe no other subject than eternal dulness. I don't know what is the matter with David; I am afraid he is grown superannuated, for his prologues and epilogues used to be incomparable."

"Nothing is so fatiguing," said Mrs. Thrale, "as the life of a wit: he and Wilks are the two oldest men of their ages I know; for they have both worn themselves out by being eternally on the rack to give entertainment to others."

"David, madam," said the doctor, "looks much older than he is; for his face has had double the business of any other man's; it is never at rest; when he speaks one minute, he has quite a different countenance to what he assumes the next; I don't believe he ever kept the same look for half an hour together in the whole course of his life; and such an eternal, restless, fatiguing play of the muscles must certainly wear out a man's face before its real time."

"O yes," cried Mrs. Thrale, "we must certainly make some allowance for such wear and tear of a man's face."

The next name that was started was that of Sir John Hawkins: and Mrs. Thrale said, "Why now, Dr. Johnson, he is another of those whom you suffer nobody to abuse but yourself; Garrick is one,



too; for if any other person speaks against him, yc
in a minute!"

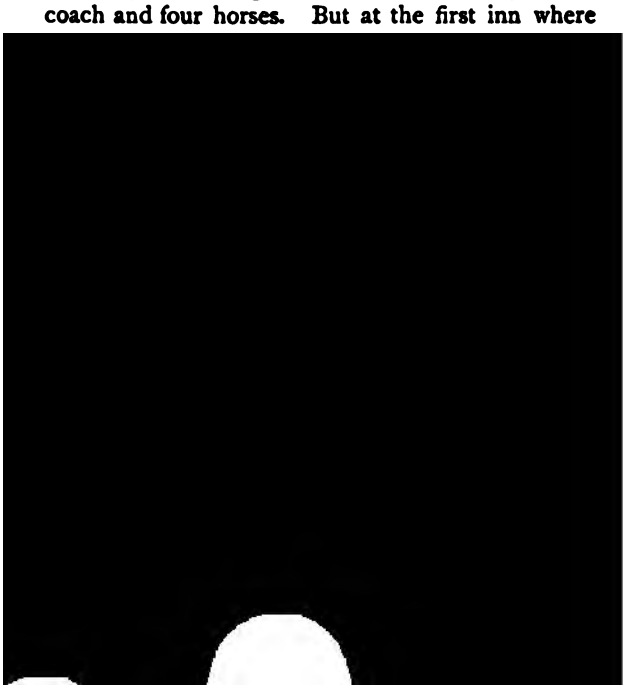
"Why, madam," answered he, "they don't know
him, and when to praise him; I will allow no ma
David that he does not deserve; and as to Sir Jc
believe him to be an honest man at the bottom: but
penurious, and he is mean, and it must be owned he
brutality, and a tendency to savageness, that cann
fended."

We all laughed, as he meant we should, at this c
speaking in his favour, and he then related an anec
he knew to be true in regard to his meanness. He s
and he once belonged to the same club, but that as
after the first night of his admission, he desired to b
his share.

"And was he excused?"

"Oh yes; for no man is angry at another for being
self! we all scorned him, and admitted his plea. Fc
such a fool as to pay my share for wine, though I r
But Sir John was a most *unclubable* man!"

"And this," continued he, "reminds me of a gen
with whom I travelled once; I suppose I must call
and lady, according to form, because they travell
coach and four horses. But at the first inn where



"Who," he said, "might be very good children if they were let alone; but the father is never easy when he is not making them do something which they cannot do; they must repeat a fable, or a speech, or the Hebrew alphabet; and they might as well count twenty, for what they know of the matter: however, the father says half, for he prompts every other word. But he could not have chosen a man who would have been less entertained by such means."

"I believe not!" cried Mrs. Thrale: "nothing is more ridiculous than parents cramming their children's nonsense down other people's throats. I keep mine as much out of the way as I can."

"Yours, madam," answered he, "are in nobody's way; no children can be better managed or less troublesome; but your fault is, a too great perverseness in not allowing anybody to give them anything. Why should they not have a cherry, or a gooseberry, as well as bigger children?"

"Because they are sure to return such gifts by wiping their hands upon the giver's gown or coat, and nothing makes children more offensive. People only make the offer to please the parents, and they wish the poor children at Jericho when they accept it."

"But, madam, it is a great deal more offensive to refuse them. Let those who make the offer look to their own gowns and coats, for when you interfere they only wish *you* at Jericho."

"It is difficult," said Mrs. Thrale, "to please everybody."

Indeed, the freedom with which Dr. Johnson condemns whatever he disapproves, is astonishing; and the strength of words he uses would, to most people, be intolerable; but Mrs. Thrale seems to have a sweetness of disposition that equals all her other excellences, and far from making a point of vindicating herself, she generally receives his admonitions with the most respectful silence.

* * * * * * *

(*Vol. I., page* 61.)

We got home late, and had the company of Mr. E——, and of Mr. Rose Fuller, a young man who lives at Streatham, and is nephew of the famous Rose Fuller; and whether Dr. Johnson did not like them, or whether he was displeased that we went out, or whether he was not well, I know not; but he never opened his mouth, except in answer to a question, till he bid us good night.

SATURDAY MORNING.—Dr. Johnson was again all himself; and so civil to me!—even admiring how I dressed myself! Indeed, it is well I have so much of his favour; for it seems he always speaks his mind



concerning the dress of ladies, and all ladies who are here obey his injunctions implicitly, and alter whatever he disapproves. This is a part of his character that much surprises me: but notwithstanding he is sometimes so absent, and always so near-sighted, he scrutinises into every part of almost everybody's appearance. They tell me of a Miss Brown, who often visits here, and who has a slovenly way of dressing. "And when she comes down in a morning," says Mrs. Thrale, "her hair will be all loose, and her cap half off; and then Dr. Johnson, who sees something is wrong, and does not know where the fault is, concludes it is in the cap, and says, 'My dear, what do you wear such a vile cap for?' 'I'll change it, sir,' cries the poor girl, 'if you don't like it.' 'Ay, do,' he says; and away runs poor Miss Brown; but when she gets on another, it's the same thing, for the cap has nothing to do with the fault. And then she wonders that Dr. Johnson should not like the cap, for she thinks it very pretty. And so on with her gown, which he also makes her change; but if the poor girl were to change through all her wardrobe, unless she could put her things on better, he would still find fault."

When Dr. Johnson was gone, she told me of my mother's being obliged to change her dress.

"Now," said she, "Mrs. Burney had on a very pretty linen jacket and coat, and was going to church; but Dr. Johnson, who, I suppose, did not like her in a jacket, saw something was the matter, and so found fault with the linen: and he looked and peered, and then said, 'Why, madam, this won't do! you must not go to church so!' So away went poor Mrs. Burney and changed her gown! And when she had done so, he did not like it, but he did not know why; so he told her she should not wear a black hat and cloak in summer! Oh, how he did bother poor Mrs. Burney! and himself too, for if the things had been put on to his mind, he would have taken no notice of them."

"Why," said Mr. Thrale, very drily, "I don't think Mrs. Burney a very good dresser."

"Last time she came," said Mrs. Thrale, "she was in a white cloak, and she told Dr. Johnson she had got her old white cloak scoured on purpose to oblige him! 'Scoured!' says he, 'ay,—have you, madam?'—so he see-sawed, for he could not for shame find fault, but he did not seem to like the scouring."

And now let me try to recollect an account he gave us of certain celebrated ladies of his acquaintance: an account which, had you heard from himself, would have made you die with laughing, his manner is so peculiar, and enforces his humour so originally.

It was begun by Mrs. Thrale's apologising to him for troubling him with some question she thought trifling—O, I remember! We had been talking of colours, and of the fantastic names given to them, and why the palest lilac should be called a *soupir étouffé;* and when Dr. Johnson came in she applied to him.

"Why, madam," said he, with wonderful readiness, "it is called a stifled sigh because it is checked in its progress, and only half a colour."

I could not help expressing my amazement at his universal readiness upon all subjects, and Mrs. Thrale said to him,

"Sir, Miss Burney wonders at your patience with such stuff; but I tell her you are used to me, for I believe I torment you with more foolish questions than anybody else dares do."

"No, madam," said he, "you don't torment me;—you teaze me, indeed, sometimes."

"Ay, so I do, Dr. Johnson, and I wonder you bear with my nonsense."

"No, madam, you never talk nonsense; you have as much sense, and more wit, than any woman I know!"

"Oh," cried Mrs. Thrale, blushing, "it is my turn to go under the table this morning, Miss Burney!"

"And yet," continued the doctor, with the most comical look, "I have known all the wits, from Mrs. Montagu down to Bet Flint!"

"Bet Flint!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "pray who is she?"

"Oh, a fine character, madam! She was habitually a slut and a drunkard, and occasionally a thief and a harlot."

"And, for Heaven's sake, how came you to know her?"

"Why, madam, she figured in the literary world, too! Bet Flint wrote her own life, and called herself Cassandra, and it was in verse;—it began:

> 'When Nature first ordained my birth,
> A diminutive I was born on earth:
> And then I came from a dark abode,
> Into a gay and gaudy world.'

So Bet brought me her verses to correct; but I gave her half-a-crown, and she liked it as well. Bet had a fine spirit; she advertised for a husband, but she had no success, for she told me no man aspired to her! Then she hired very handsome lodgings and a footboy; and she got a harpsichord, but Bet could not play; however, she put herself in fine attitudes, and drummed."

Then he gave an account of another of these geniuses, who called herself by some fine name, I have forgotten what.



"She had not quite the same stock of virtue," continued he, "nor the same stock of honesty as Bet Flint; but I suppose she envied her accomplishments, for she was so little moved by the power of harmony, that while Bet Flint thought she was drumming very divinely, the other jade had her indicted for a nuisance!"

"And pray what became of her, sir?"

"Why, madam, she stole a quilt from the man of the house, and he had her taken up: but Bet Flint had a spirit not to be subdued; so when she found herself obliged to go to jail, she ordered a sedan-chair, and bid her footboy walk before her. However, the boy proved refractory, for he was ashamed, though his mistress was not."

"And did she ever get out of jail again, sir?"

"Yes, madam; when she came to her trial, the judge acquitted her. 'So now,' she said to me, 'the quilt is my own, and now I'll make a petticoat of it.' Oh, I loved Bet Flint!"

Oh, how we all laughed! Then he gave an account of another lady, who called herself Laurinda, and who also wrote verses and stole furniture; but he had not the same affection for her, he said, though she too "was a lady who had high notions of honour."

Then followed the history of another, who called herself Hortensia, and who walked up and down the park repeating a book of Virgil.

"But," said he, "though I know her story, I never had the good fortune to see her."

After this he gave us an account of the famous Mrs. Pinkethman; "And she," he said, "told me she owed all her misfortunes to her wit: for she was so unhappy as to marry a man who thought himself also a wit, though I believe she gave him not implicit credit for it, but it occasioned much contradiction and ill-will."

"Bless me, sir!" cried Mrs. Thrale, "how can all these vagabonds contrive to get at *you*, of all people?"

"O the dear creatures!" cried he, laughing heartily, "I can't but be glad to see them!"

"Why I wonder, sir, you never went to see Mrs. Rudd among the rest?"

"Why, madam, I believe I should," said he, "if it was not for the newspapers; but I am prevented many frolics that I should like very well, since I am become such a theme for the papers."

Now would you ever have imagined this? Bet Flint, it seems, once took Kitty Fisher to see him, but to his no little regret he was not at home. "And Mrs. Williams," he added, "did not love Bet Flint, but Bet Flint made herself very easy about that."

How Mr. Crisp would have enjoyed this account! He gave it all with so droll a solemnity, and it was all so unexpected, that Mrs. Thrale and I were both almost equally diverted.

* * * * * * *

(*Vol. I., page* 67.)

Dr. Johnson came home to dinner.

In the evening he was as lively and full of wit and sport as I have ever seen him; and Mrs. Thrale and I had him quite to ourselves; for Mr. Thrale came in from giving an election dinner (to which he sent two bucks and six pine-apples) so tired, that he neither opened his eyes nor mouth, but fell fast asleep. Indeed, after tea he generally does.

Dr. Johnson was very communicative concerning his present work of the Lives of the Poets; Dryden is now in the press, and he told us he had been just writing a dissertation upon Hudibras.

He gave us an account of Mrs. Lennox. Her "Female Quixote" is very justly admired here. But Mrs. Thrale says, that though her books are generally approved, nobody likes her. I find she, among others, waited on Dr. Johnson upon her commencing writer, and he told us that, at her request, he carried her to Richardson.

"Poor Charlotte Lennox!" continued he; "when we came to the house, she desired me to leave her, 'for,' says she, 'I am under great restraint in your presence; but if you leave me alone with Richardson, I'll give you a very good account of him:' however, I fear poor Charlotte was disappointed, for she gave me no account at all."

He then told us of two little productions of our Mr. Harris, which we read; they are very short and very clever: one is called "Fashion," the other "Much Ado," and they are both of them full of a sportive humour that I had not suspected to belong to Mr. Harris, the learned grammarian.

Some time after, turning suddenly to me, he said, "Miss Burney, what sort of reading do you delight in? History, travels, poetry, or romances?"

"O sir!" cried I, "I dread being catechised by you. I dare not make any answer, for I fear whatever I should say would be wrong!"

"Whatever you should say—how's that?"

"Why, not whatever I should, but whatever I could say."

He laughed, and to my great relief spared me any further questions upon the subject.

* * * * * * *



(*Vol. I., page* 73.)

The day was passed most agreeably. In the evening we had, as usual, a literary conversation. I say we, only because Mrs. Thrale will make me take some share, by perpetually applying to me; and, indeed, there can be no better house for rubbing up the memory, as I hardly ever read, saw, or heard of any book that by some means or other has not been mentioned here.

Mr. Lort produced several curious MSS. of the famous Bristol Chatterton; among others, his will, and divers verses written against Dr. Johnson, as a placeman and pensioner; all which he read aloud, with a steady voice and unmoved countenance.

I was astonished at him; Mrs. Thrale not much pleased; Mr. Thrale silent and attentive; and Mr. Seward was slily laughing. Dr. Johnson himself listened profoundly, and laughed openly. Indeed, I believe he wishes his abusers no other thing than a good dinner, like Pope.

Just as we had got our biscuits and toast-and-water, which make the Streatham supper, and which, indeed, is all there is any chance of eating after our late and great dinners, Mr. Lort suddenly said:

"Pray, ma'am, have you heard anything of a novel that runs about a good deal, called 'Evelina?'"

What a ferment did this question, before such a set, put me in!

* * * * * * *

(*Vol. I., page* 92.)

Before dinner, to my great joy, Dr. Johnson returned home from Warley Common. I followed Mrs. Thrale into the library to see him, and he is so near-sighted, that he took me for Miss Streatfield: but he did not welcome me less kindly when he found his mistake, which Mrs. Thrale made known by saying—"No, 'tis Miss Streatfield's rival, Miss Burney."

At tea-time the subject turned upon the domestic economy of Dr. Johnson's own household. Mrs. Thrale has often acquainted me that his house is quite filled and overrun with all sorts of strange creatures, whom he admits for mere charity, and because nobody else will admit them,—for his charity is unbounded,—or, rather, bounded only by his circumstances.

The account he gave of the adventures and absurdities of the set, was highly diverting, but too diffused for writing,—though one or two speeches I must give. I think I shall occasionally theatricalise my dialogues.

Mrs. Thrale—Pray, sir, how does Mrs. Williams like all this tribe?

Dr. Johnson—Madam, she does not like them at all; but their fondness for her is not greater. She and De Mullin quarrel incessantly; but as they can both be occasionally of service to each other, and as neither of them have any other place to go to, their animosity does not force them to separate.

Mrs. T.—And pray, sir, what is Mr. Macbean?

Dr. J.—Madam, he is a Scotchman: he is a man of great learning, and for his learning I respect him, and I wish to serve him. He knows many languages, and knows them well; but he knows nothing of life. I advised him to write a geographical dictionary; but I have lost all hopes of his ever doing anything properly, since I found he gave as much labour to Capua as to Rome.

Mr. T.—And pray who is clerk of your kitchen, sir?

Dr. J.—Why, sir, I am afraid there is none; a general anarchy prevails in my kitchen, as I am told by Mr. Levat, who says it is not now what it used to be!

Mrs. T.—Mr. Levat, I suppose, sir, has the office of keeping the hospital in health? for he is an apothecary.

Dr. J.—Levat, madam, is a brutal fellow, but I have a good regard for him; for his brutality is in his manners, not his mind.

Mr. T.—But how do you get your dinners drest?

Dr. J.—Why De Mullin has the chief management of the kitchen; but our roasting is not magnificent, for we have no jack.

Mr. T.—No jack? Why how do they manage without?

Dr. J.—Small joints, I believe, they manage with a string, and larger are done at the tavern. I have some thoughts (with a profound gravity) of buying a jack, because I think a jack is some credit to a house.

Mr. T.—Well, but you'll have a spit, too?

Dr. J.—No, sir, no; that would be superfluous; for we shall never use it; and if a jack is seen, a spit will be presumed!

Mrs. T.—But pray, sir, who is the Poll you talk of? She that you use to abet in her quarrels with Mrs. Williams, and call out, "At her again, Poll! Never flinch, Poll?"

Dr. J.—Why, I took to Poll very well at first, but she won't do upon a nearer examination.

Mrs. T.—How came she among you, sir?

Dr. J.—Why I don't rightly remember, but we could spare her very well from us. Poll is a stupid slut; I had some hopes of her at first; but when I talked to her tightly and closely, I could make nothing

of her; she was wiggle waggle, and I could never to be categorical. I wish Miss Burney would come she would only give us a week, we should furnish materials for a new scene in her next work.

(*Vol. I., page* 95.)

A little while after, he asked Mrs. Thrale who had in his absence?

"Who?" cried she;—"why Burke!—Burke sat finish it; and Sir Joshua Reynolds is mad about it, an give fifty pounds to know the author. But our fu nieces—we made them believe I wrote the book, an me the credit of it at once."

"I am sorry for it, madam," cried he, quite angril much to blame; deceits of that kind ought never t they have a worse tendency than you are aware of."

Mrs. T.—Why, don't frighten yourself, sir; Miss B all the credit she has a right to, for I told them who they went.

Dr. J.—But you were very wrong for misleading th such jests are extremely blameable; they are foolish and they are wrong, because they always leave a d mind. What first passed will be always recollected and they will never feel clearly convinced which wrote Thrale or Miss Burney.

Mrs. T.—Well, well, I am ready to take my Bible me; and if that won't do, Miss Burney must take her

I was then looking over the "Life of Cowley," whic self given me to read, at the same time that he gave that of Waller. They are now printed, though they w lished for some time. But he bade me put it away.

"Do," cried he, "put away that now, and prattle w make this little Burney prattle, and I am sure she pratt shall teach her another lesson than to sit thus silent done with her."

"To talk," cried I, "is the only lesson I shall be bac from you, sir."

"You shall give me," cried he, "a discourse upon come, begin! Tell us the necessity of regulating th over and curbing them! Did you ever read Norri Love?'"

"No, sir," said I, laughing, yet staring a little.

Dr. J.—Well, it is worth your reading. He will make you see that inordinate love is the root of all evil: inordinate love of wealth brings on avarice; of wine, brings on intemperance; of power, brings on cruelty; and so on. He deduces from inordinate love all human frailty.

Mrs. T.—To-morrow, sir, Mrs. Montagu dines here, and then you will have talk enough.

Dr. Johnson began to see-saw, with a countenance strongly expressive of inward fun, and after enjoying it some time in silence, he suddenly, and with great animation, turned to me and cried,

"Down with her, Burney!—down with her!—spare her not!—attack her, fight her, and down with her at once! You are a rising wit, and she is at the top; and when I was beginning the world, and was nothing and nobody, the joy of my life was to fire at all the established wits! and then everybody loved to halloo me on. But there is no game now; everybody would be glad to see me conquered: but then, when I was new, to vanquish the great ones was all the delight of my poor little dear soul! So at her, Burney—at her, and down with her!"

Oh, how we were all amused! By the way, I must tell you that Mrs. Montagu is in very great estimation here, even with Dr. Johnson himself, when others do not praise her improperly. Mrs. Thrale ranks her as the first of women in the literary way. I should have told you that Miss Gregory, daughter of the Gregory who wrote the "Letters," or, "Legacy of Advice," lives with Mrs. Montagu, and was invited to accompany her.

"Mark, now," said Dr. Johnson, "if I contradict her to-morrow. I am determined, let her say what she will, that I will not contradict her."

Mrs. T.—Why, to be sure, sir, you did put her a little out of countenance last time she came. Yet you were neither rough, nor cruel, nor ill-natured; but still, when a lady changes colour, we imagine her feelings are not quite composed.

Dr. J.—Why, madam, I won't answer that I shan't contradict her again, if she provokes me as she did then; but a less provocation I will withstand. I believe I am not high in her good graces already; and I begin (added he, laughing heartily) to tremble for my admission into her new house. I doubt I shall never see the inside of it.

(Mrs. Montagu is building a most superb house.)



Mrs. T.—Oh, I warrant you, she fears you, indeed; but that, you know, is nothing uncommon: and dearly I love to hear your disquisitions; for certainly she is the first woman for literary knowledge in England, and if in England, I hope I may say in the world.

Dr. J.—I believe you may, madam. She diffuses more knowledge in her conversation than any woman I know, or, indeed, almost any man.

Mrs. T.—I declare I know no man equal to her, take away yourself and Burke, for that art. And you who love magnificence, won't quarrel with her, as everybody else does, for her love of finery.

Dr. J.—No, I shall not quarrel with her upon that topic. (Then, looking earnestly at me,) "Nay," he added, "it's very handsome!"

"What, sir?" cried I, amazed.

"Why, your cap:—I have looked at it some time, and I like it much. It has not that vile bandeau across it, which I have so often cursed."

* * * * * * *

(*Vol. I., page* 109.)

I have had a thousand delightful conversations with Dr. Johnson, who, whether he loves me or not, I am sure seems to have some opinion of my discretion, for he speaks of all this house to me with unbounded confidence, neither diminishing faults, nor exaggerating praise. Whenever he is below stairs he keeps me a prisoner, for he does not like I should quit the room a moment; if I rise, he constantly calls out, "Don't you go, little Burney!"

Last night, when we were talking of compliments and of gross speeches, Mrs. Thrale most justly said, that nobody could make either like Dr. Johnson. "Your compliments, sir, are made seldom, but when they are made they have an elegance unequalled; but then when you are angry, who dares make speeches so bitter and so cruel?"

Dr. J.—Madam, I am always sorry when I make bitter speeches, and I never do it but when I am insufferably vexed.

Mrs. T.—Yes, sir; but you suffer things to vex you that nobody else would vex at. I am sure I have had my share of scolding from you!

Dr. J.—It is true, you have; but you have borne it like an angel, and you have been the better for it.

Mrs. T.—That I believe, sir: for I have received more instruction from you than from any man, or any book: and the vanity that you

should think me worth instructing always overcame the vanity of being found fault with. And so you had the scolding, and I the improvement.

F. B.—And I am sure both make for the honour of both!

Dr. J.—I think so too. But Mrs. Thrale is a sweet creature, and never angry; she has a temper the most delightful of any woman I ever knew.

Mrs. T.—This I can tell you, sir, and without any flattery—I not only bear your reproofs when present, but in almost everything I do in your absence, I ask myself whether you would like it, and what you would say to it. Yet I believe there is nobody you dispute with oftener than me.

F. B.—But you two are so well established with one another, that you can bear rebuff that would kill a stranger.

Dr. J.—Yes; but we disputed the same before we were so well established with one another.

Mrs. T.—Oh, sometimes I think I shall die no other death than hearing the bitter things he says to others. What he says to myself I can bear, because I know how sincerely he is my friend, and that he means to mend me; but to others it is cruel.

Dr. J.—Why, madam, you often provoke me to say severe things, by unreasonable commendation. If you would not call for my praise, I would not give you my censure; but it constantly moves my indignation to be applied to, to speak well of a thing which I think contemptible.

F. B.—Well, this I know, whoever I may hear complain of Dr. Johnson's severity, I shall always vouch for his kindness, as far as regards myself, and his indulgence.

Mrs. T.—Ay, but I hope he will trim you yet, too!

Dr. J.—I hope not: I should be very sorry to say anything that should vex my dear little Burney.

F. B.—If you did, sir, it would vex me more than you can imagine. I should sink in a minute.

Mrs. T.—I remember, sir, when we were travelling in Wales, how you called me to account for my civility to the people; "Madam," you said, "let me have no more of this idle commendation of nothing. Why is it, that whatever you see, and whoever you see, you are to be so indiscriminately lavish of praise?" "Why, I'll tell you, sir," said I, "when I am with you, and Mr. Thrale, and Queeny, I am obliged to be civil for four!"

There was a cutter for you! But this I must say, for the honour

of both, Mrs. Thrale speaks to Dr. Johnson with as
(though with greater softness) as he does to her.

* * * * * *

Soon after he went, I went and shut myself up i
summer-house, to read Irene:—which, indeed, thou
play, is a beautiful poem.

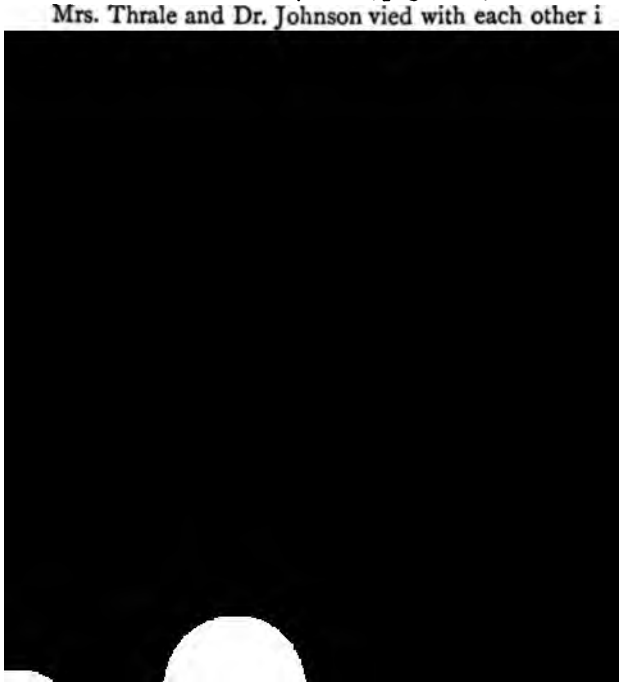
As my dear father spent the rest of the day here, I
particularise, but leave accounts to his better commu
probably told you that the P—— family came in to
knows Mrs. P——, pray tell him what Dr. Johnso
When they were gone, Mrs. Thrale complained that
worn out with that tiresome silly woman, who had
family and affairs till she was sick to death of hearing

"Madam," said he, "why do you blame the woma
sensible thing she could do—talking of her family a
For how should a woman who is as empty as a drum,
other subject?—If you speak to her of the sun, she d
rises in the east;—if you speak to her of the moon
know it changes at the full;—if you speak to her of
does not know she is the king's wife;—how, then, can
for talking of her family and affairs?"

* * * * * *

(*Vol. I., page* 180.)

Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson vied with each other i



The heads of one of their debates I must try to remember, because I should be sorry to forget. Sir Philip explained his bill; Dr. Johnson at first scoffed it; Mr. Thrale betted a guinea the motion would not pass, and Sir Philip, that he should divide a hundred and fifty upon it.

Sir Philip, addressing himself to Mrs. Thrale, hoped she would not suffer the Tories to warp her judgment, and told me he hoped my father had not tainted my principles; and then he further explained his bill, and indeed made it appear so equitable, that Mrs. Thrale gave in to it, and wished her husband to vote for it. He still hung back; but, to our general surprise, Dr. Johnson having made more particular inquiries into its merits, first softened towards it, and then declared it a very rational and fair bill, and joined with Mrs. Thrale in soliciting Mr. Thrale's vote.

Sir Philip was, and with very good reason, quite delighted. He opened upon politics more amply, and freely declared his opinions, which were so strongly against the government, and so much bordering upon the republican principles, that Dr. Johnson suddenly took fire; he called back his recantation, begged Mr. Thrale not to vote for Sir Philip's bill, and grew very animated against his antagonist.

"The bill," said he, "ought to be opposed by all honest men! in itself, and considered simply, it is equitable, and I would forward it; but when we find what a faction it is to support and encourage, it ought not to be listened to. All men should oppose it who do not wish well to sedition!"

These, and several other expressions yet more strong, he made use of; and had Sir Philip had less unalterable politeness, I believe they would have had a vehement quarrel. He maintained his ground, however, with calmness and steadiness, though he had neither argument nor wit at all equal to such an opponent.

Dr. Johnson pursued him with unabating vigour and dexterity, and at length, though he could not convince, he so entirely baffled him, that Sir Philip was self-compelled to be quiet—which, with a very good grace, he confessed.

Dr. Johnson then, recollecting himself, and thinking, as he owned afterwards, that the dispute grew too serious, with a skill all his own, suddenly and unexpectedly turned it to burlesque; and taking Sir Philip by the hand at the moment we arose after supper, and were separating for the night,

"Sir Philip," said he, "you are too liberal a man for the party to which you belong; I shall have much pride in the honour of con-

ending you; for I really believe, if you were not
company, the spirit of faction would not have pu
then, sir, to the House, but make out your motion
bill, and surprise the world by turning to the side of
Rose, sir, when they least expect you, and address y
to this purpose:—Gentlemen, I have, for many a
deceived and seduced by you. I have now opene
that you are all scoundrels—the subversion of all g
aim. Gentlemen, I will no longer herd among m
funy my name and character must be included. I th
you all, gentlemen, as you deserve to be renounced.
Then shaking his hand heartily, he added,
"Go, sir, go to bed; meditate upon this recan
the morning a more honest man than you hid dow

* * * * *

(*Vol. I., page 193.*)

Dr. Johnson has more fun, and comical humour,
sense about him, than almost anybody I ever sa
with those he likes; for otherwise, he can be as se
as report relates him.

* * * * *

(*Vol. II., page 269.*)

THURSDAY, JUNE 19TH, 1783.—We heard to-day
had been taken ill, in a way that gave a dreadful sho
a most anxious alarm to his friends. Mr. Seward
here, and my father and I instantly went to his
earnestly desired me, when we lived so much toge
to see him frequently if he should be ill. He s
he had medical people with him, and could not a
but he sent me down a most kind message, that h
calling, and when he was better should hope to see
the satisfaction to hear from Mrs. Williams that t
pronounced him to be in no danger, and expected a

The stroke was confined to his tongue. Mrs. W
most striking and touching circumstance that attend
was at about four o'clock in the morning: he fou
paralytic affection; he rose, and composed in his
prayer to the Almighty, "that whatever were the su
he must prepare himself, it would please Him, thro

mediation of our blessed Saviour, to spare his intellects, and let them all fall upon his body." When he had composed this, internally, he endeavoured to speak it aloud, but found his voice was gone.

* * * * * * *

(*Vol. II., page* 282.)

THURSDAY, OCT. 29TH, 1783.—This morning, at breakfast, Mr. Hoole called. I wanted to call upon Dr. Johnson, and it is so disagreeable to me to go to him alone, now poor Mrs. Williams is dead, on account of the quantity of men always visiting him, that I most gladly accepted, and almost asked, his 'squireship.

We went together. The dear Doctor received me with open arms.

"Ah, dearest of all dear ladies!" he cried, and made me sit in his best chair.

He had not breakfasted.

"Do you forgive my coming so soon?" said I.

"I cannot forgive your not coming sooner," he answered.

I asked if I should make his breakfast, which I have not done since we left Streatham; he readily consented.

"But, sir," quoth I, "I am in the wrong chair." For I was away from the table.

"It is so difficult," said he, "for any thing to be wrong that belongs to you, that it can only be I am in the wrong chair, to keep you from the right one."

And then we changed.

You will see by this how good were his spirits and his health.

I stayed with him two hours, and could hardly get away; he wanted me to dine with him, and said he would send home to excuse me; but I could not possibly do that. Yet I left him with real regret.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 19TH, 1783.—I received a letter from Dr. Johnson, which I have not by me, but will try to recollect.

* * * * * * *

(*Vol. II., page* 295.)

TUESDAY, DEC. 30, 1783.—I went to Dr. Johnson, and spent the evening with him. He was very indifferent, indeed. There were some very disagreeable people with him; and he once affected me very much, by turning suddenly to me, and grasping my hand, and saying,—

"The blister I have tried for my breath has betrayed some very

(*Vol. II., page* 327.)

NORBURY PARK, SUNDAY, NOV. 28TH, 1784.—I smile at sight of this date! Let me tell her how i Last Thursday, Nov. 25th, my father set me down he went on upon business. I was anxious to again se who has had terrible health since his return from Li in, though very ill. He was alone, which I much rej a longer and more satisfactory conversation with h for many months. He was in rather better spirit lately seen him; but he told me he was going tc out of town might do for him.

"I remember," said he, "that my wife, when sh poor woman, was also advised to sleep out of tov was carried to the lodgings that had been preparec plained that the staircase was in very bad conditic was beaten off the wall in many places. 'Oh,' sa house, 'that's nothing but by the knocks against the poor souls that have died in the lodgings!'"

He laughed, though not without apparent secret me this. I felt extremely shocked, but, willing to at least to the literal story, I only exclaimed aga absurdity of such a confession.

"Such a confession," cried he, "to a person tl his lodging for her health, contains, indeed, more can well lay our account for."

I had seen Miss T. the day before.

"So," said he, "did I."

Bristol milk-woman, and told him the tales I had heard of her writing so wonderfully, though she had read nothing but Young and Milton; "though those," I continued, "could never possibly, I should think, be the first authors with anybody. Would children understand them? and grown people who have not read are children in literature."

"Doubtless," said he; "but there is nothing so little comprehended among mankind as what is genius. They give to it all, when it can be but a part. Genius is nothing more than knowing the use of tools; but there must be tools for it to use: a man who has spent all his life in this room will give a very poor account of what is contained in the next."

"Certainly, sir; yet there is such a thing as invention? Shakspeare could never have seen a Caliban."

"No; but he had seen a man, and knew, therefore, how to vary him to a monster. A man who would draw a monstrous cow, must first know what a cow commonly is; or how can he tell that to give her an ass's head or an elephant's tusk will make her monstrous? Suppose you shew me a man who is a very expert carpenter; another will say he was born to be a carpenter—but what if he had never seen any wood? Let two men, one with genius, the other with none, look at an overturned waggon:—he who has no genius, will think of the waggon only as he sees it, overturned, and walk on; he who has genius, will paint it to himself before it was overturned,—standing still, and moving on, and heavy loaded, and empty; but both must see the waggon, to think of it at all."

How just and true all this, my dear Susy! He then animated, and talked on, upon this milk-woman, upon a once as famous shoemaker, and upon our immortal Shakspeare, with as much fire, spirit, wit, and truth of criticism and judgment, as ever yet I have heard him. How delightfully bright are his faculties, though the poor and infirm machine that contains them seems alarmingly giving way.

Yet, all brilliant as he was, I saw him growing worse, and offered to go, which, for the first time I ever remember, he did not oppose; but, most kindly pressing both my hands,—

"Be not," he said, in a voice of even tenderness, "be not longer in coming again for my letting you go now."

I assured him I would be the sooner, and was running off, but he called me back, in a solemn voice, and, in a manner the most energetic, said,—

"Remember me in your prayers!"



second time to see poor Dr. Johnson, and bot
to admit me. I know how very much worse h
saw him last, which was the morning before l
repeatedly and even earnestly begged me to cc
to see him both as soon and as often as I coul
Hoole, that he inquired of Dr. Brocklesby if l
might live six weeks? and the Doctor's hesita
has been more deeply depressed than ever.
does, no one can wonder. Why he should fea

He sent me down yesterday, by a clergyman
kindest of messages, and I hardly know whethe
again or not; though I know still less why I
both must and shall. One thing, his extreme c
sidered, has both surprised and pleased me; h
an amanuensis with him, and dictates to him st
ticularly Latin and Greek, as he has formerly
to his friends without ever committing to pape
not only gratify his survivors, but serve to dive

The good Mr. Hoole and equally good M
rather as nurses than friends, for they sit whol
out even speaking to him. He will not, it se
least very rarely. At times, indeed, he re-anir
over, and he says of himself, "I am now lik
enrages me."

My father saw him once while I was away, a
with him, who was desirous of paying his respe
in person. He rallied a little while they were t

without his direct permission. I desired Frank to tell him I called to pay my respects to him, but not to disturb him if he was not well enough to see me. Mr. Strahan, a clergyman, he said, was with him alone.

In a few minutes, this Mr. Strahan came to me himself. He told me Dr. Johnson was very ill, very much obliged to me for coming, but so weak and bad he hoped I would excuse his not seeing me.

* * * * * * *

At night my father brought us the most dismal tidings of dear Dr. Johnson. Dr. Warren had seen him, and told him to take what opium he pleased! He had thanked and taken leave of all his physicians. Alas!—I shall lose him, and he will take no leave of me! My father was deeply depressed; he has himself tried in vain for admission this week. Yet some people see him—the Hooles, Mr. Sastres, Mr. Langton;—but then they must be in the house, watching for one moment, whole hours. I hear from every one he is now perfectly resigned to his approaching fate, and no longer in terror of death. I am thankfully happy in hearing that he speaks himself now of the change his mind has undergone, from its dark horror, and says—"He feels the irradiation of hope!" Good, and pious, and excellent Christian—who shall feel it if not he?

(*Vol. II., page* 336.)

DEC. 11TH, 1784.—We had a party to dinner, by long appointment, for which, indeed, none of us were well disposed, the apprehension of hearing news only of death being hard upon us all. The party was, Dr. Rose, Dr. Gillies, Dr. Garthshore, and Charles.

The day could not be well—but mark the night.

My father, in the morning, saw this first of men! I had not his account till bed-time; he feared over-exciting me. He would not, he said, but have seen him for worlds! He happened to be better, and admitted him. He was up, and very composed. He took his hand very kindly, asked after all his family, and then, in particular, how Fanny did?

"I hope," he said, "Fanny did not take it amiss that I did not see her? I was very bad!"

Amiss!—what a word! Oh that I had been present to have answered it! My father stayed, I suppose, half an hour, and then was coming away. He again took his hand, and encouraged him to come again to him; and when he was taking leave, said—"Tell Fanny to pray for me!"

Ah! dear Dr. Johnson! might I but have *your* prayers! After



which, still grasping his hand, he made a prayer for himself,—the most fervent, pious, humble, eloquent, and touching, my father says, that ever was composed. Oh, would I had heard it! He ended it with Amen! in which my father joined, and was echoed by all present. And again, when my father was leaving him, he brightened up, something of his arch look returned, and he said—"I think I shall throw the ball at Fanny yet!"

Little more passed ere my father came away, decided, most tenderly, not to tell me this till our party was gone.

This most earnestly increased my desire to see him; this kind and frequent mention of me melted me into double sorrow and regret. I would give the world I had but gone to him that day! It was, however impossible, and the day was over before I knew he had said what I look upon as a call to me. This morning, after church time, I went. Frank said he was very ill, and saw nobody; I told him I had understood by my father the day before that he meant to see me. He then let me in. I went into his room up stairs; he was in his bedroom. I saw it crowded, and ran hastily down. Frank told me his master had refused seeing even Mr. Langton. I told him merely to say I had called, but by no means to press my admission. His own feelings were all that should be consulted; his tenderness, I knew, would be equal, whether he was able to see me or not.

I went into the parlour, preferring being alone in the cold, to any company with a fire. Here I waited long, here and upon the stairs, which I ascended and descended to meet again with Frank, and make inquiries; but I met him not. At last, upon Dr. Johnson's ringing his bell, I saw Frank enter his room, and Mr. Langton follow. "Who's that?" I heard him say; they answered, "Mr. Langton," and I found he did not return.

Soon after, all the rest went away but a Mrs. Davis, a good sort of woman, whom this truly charitable soul had sent for to take a dinner at his house. I then went and waited with her by the fire: it was, however, between three and four o'clock before I got any answer. Mr. Langton then came himself. He could not look at me, and I turned away from him. Mrs. Davis asked how the Doctor was? "Going on to death very fast!" was his mournful answer. "Has he taken," said she, "anything?" "Nothing at all! We carried him some bread and milk—he refused it, and said—'*The less the better.*'" She asked more questions, by which I found his faculties were perfect, his mind composed, and his dissolution was quick drawing on.

* * * * * * *

I could not immediately go on, and it is now long since I have written at all; but I will go back to this afflicting theme, which I can now better bear.

Mr. Langton was, I believe, a quarter of an hour in the room before I suspected he meant to speak to me, never looking near me. At last he said—

"This poor man, I understand, ma'am, desired yesterday to see you."

"My understanding that, sir, brought me to-day."

"Poor man! it is pity he did not know himself better, and that you should have had this trouble."

"Trouble!" cried I; "I would come a hundred times to see him the hundredth and first!"

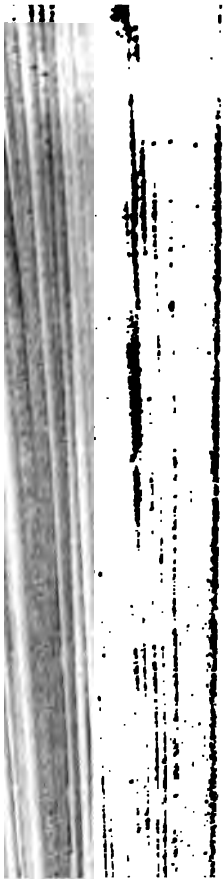
"He hopes, now, you will excuse him; he is very sorry not to see you; but he desired me to come and speak to you myself, and tell you he hopes you will excuse him, for he feels himself too weak for such an interview."

I hastily got up, left him my most affectionate respects, and every good wish I could half utter, and ran back to the coach. Ah, my Susy! I have never been to Bolt-court since! I then drove to poor Miss Strange, to make inquiries of the maid; but Andrew ran out to the coach door, and told me all hope was at an end. In short, the next day was fatal to both!—the same day!

* * * * * * *

(*Vol. II., page* 339.)

DEC. 20TH, 1784.—This day was the ever-honoured, ever-lamented Dr. Johnson committed to the earth. Oh, how sad a day to me! My father attended, and so did Charles. I could not keep my eyes dry all day; nor can I now, in the recollecting it; but let me pass over what to mourn is now so vain!



EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS
FROM MR. TWINING

REV. THOMAS TWINING TO HIS BROT

AS to Dr. Johnson, we seem to agree well in ou
likings. The best thing in all his book is, i
critique upon Cowley, or rather upon what I think
physical style of poetry. Such is that of d'Avenant, c
he takes no notice. Johnson's mind is fettered witl
poetical, political, religious and even superstitious.
is nothing. He has not the least tincture of the *esprit*
any subject. He is not a poet, nor has he any
properly called poetry, for imagination, enthusiasm
—I mean what he calls such—is only good sense pu
. . . In general I find my palate in matters of po
variance with Dr. Johnson's. . . . With all this Dr.
entertaining, never dull or trite. His style is ju
sometimes admirable, sometimes laughable, but l
gape. Without being philosophical or deep, l
Kaimes, &c., he has his originalities of thought ar
seeing things, and making you see them. This i
There is in him no echo. He is dogmatical, certa
acquit him of some reflections that savour of i
affectionately,

DR. BURNEY TO THE REV. T. TWININ

know and could name them all. We often differed in matters of taste, and in our judgments of individuals. My respect for what I thought excellent in him never operated on my reason sufficiently to incline me to subscribe to his decisions when I thought them erroneous. The knight, Sir John (Hawkins), and I met two or three times during his sickness and at his funeral. He steps forth as one of poor Johnson's six or eight biographers, with as little taste or powers of writing worthy of such an occupation as for musical history. The Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey lay all the blame on him for suffering Johnson to be so unworthily interred. The knight's first inquiring at the Abbey, in giving orders, as the most acting executor, was "What would be the difference in the expense between a public and a private funeral?" and was told only a few pounds to the prebendaries, and about ninety pairs of gloves to the choir and attendants; and he then determined that, "as Dr. Johnson had no music in him he should choose the cheapest manner of interment." And for this reason there was no organ heard, or burial service sung, for which he suffers the Dean and Chapter to be abused in all the newspapers, and joins in their abuse when the subject is mentioned in conversation. Dr. Bell has stated the case, in a letter to my friend Dr. Warren, just as I tell it to you. Again, I was told by a lady "that she found Dr. Johnson had not always been so pious and good a Christian as in the latter part of his life." "How do you know, madam?" "Why, Sir John Cullum was told so by Sir John Hawkins, who says that when Dr. Johnson came up to London first, he lived a very profligate life with Savage and others, and was an infidel, and that he (Hawkins) first converted him to Christianity!" This astonished me so much that I could not help mentioning the story and my authority to Johnson's oldest and most intimate friends, with whom I dined after attending the funeral to Westminster Abbey, and asked them if they ever heard of Johnson having been a profligate and an infidel in his younger days, and they one and all cried out with astonishment and indignation, "No!" Dr. Scott, one of the three executors, said that he had found among his papers a great number of prayers penned with great force, elegance and devotion, some of them as high up as the year 1738, which would be a sufficient answer to such a charge; and I hear to-day that Dr. Scott, without mentioning names, has said to the knight that such a report had got about. "Oh!" says Sir John, "I can best confute such a rumour, who have so long known him, and ever found him a man of the most exemplary life, and a most steady believer of the doctrines of the

Christian religion." This strange story, for the honour of Johnson and true piety, as well as the clearing up the point which now lies between the reverend and irreverend knight, I hope and trust will be sifted to the bottom. . . . Addio. C. B.

THE REV. T. TWINING TO HIS BROTHER (p. 180).

Oct. 16, 1793.

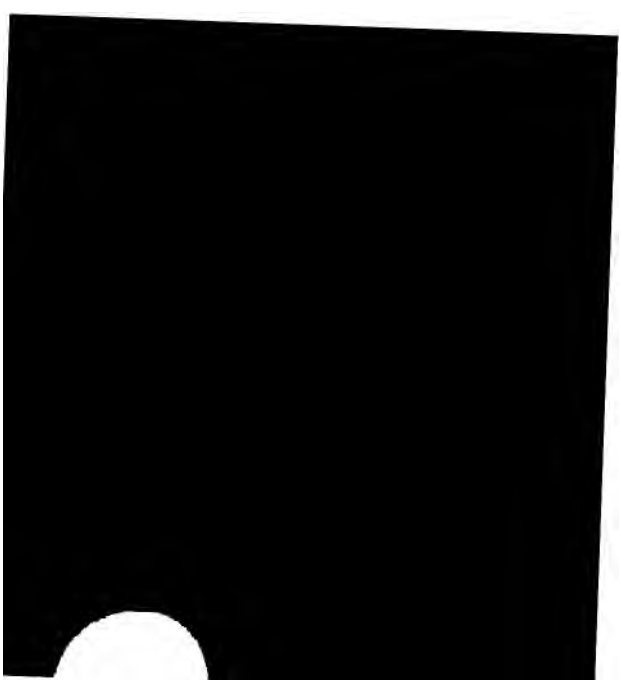
. . . I read however, and am now *tandem aliquando*, reading Boswell's "Life of Johnson," which having shrunk into octavo, I have bought, for you know how I hate all books that are too big to hold in my hand. Have you read it? I am prodigiously entertained and gratified. I laugh, it is true, at Boswell sometimes. He must be a singular character. Sometimes he says very silly things, and asks silly questions, and carries admiration and wonder to a ridiculous excess. He could never take *Nil admirari* for his motto. Yet there is a *naïveté*, a candour, and a *bonhomie* in the man that makes me like him; and all that relates to Dr. Johnson between his singularities, and his admirable sense, and undulness of conversation is highly amusing to me. I have met with those who call this book tiresome. I never read a book that was less so. Johnson's readiness of argument and repartee in conversation is surprising.





RECOLLECTIONS OF DR. JOI

BY MISS REYNOLDS.







RECOLLECTIONS OF DR.

BY MISS REYNOLDS

[From a MS. entitled "Recollections of Dr. Johnson, to Mr. Croker, by Mr. Palmer, grand-nephew of S

THE first time I was in company with Dr. Miss Cotterel's, I well remember the flatte a lady present, on her saying that she was inc morality of every person according as they liked Harlowe." He was a great admirer of Richard but of "Clarissa" he always spoke with the high He used to say, that it was the first book in th ledge it displays of the human heart. Yet of th him speak with any degree of cordiality, but with some cause of resentment against him imputed to something of jealousy, not to say Richardson's having engrossed the attentions duities of several very ingenious literary ladie call his adopted daughters, and for whom Dr. J a paternal affection (particularly for two of th Miss Mulso, now Mrs. Chapone), previous to t Richardson; and it was said, that he thought them on his account. Dr. Johnson set a high friendship than, perhaps, most men; which m posed was not a little enhanced by his acquaint



Dr. Johnson used to repeat, with very apparent delight, some lines of a poem written by Miss Mulso:—

"Say, Stella, what is love, whose cruel power
Robs virtue of content, and youth of joy?
What nymph or goddess, in what fatal hour,
Produced to light the mischief-making boy.

"Some say, by Idleness and Pleasure bred,
The smiling babe on beds of roses lay;
There with soft-honey'd dews by Fancy fed,
His infant beauties open'd on the day."[1]

Dr. Johnson had an uncommonly retentive memory for every thing that appeared to him worthy of observation. Whatever he met with in reading, particularly poetry, I believe he seldom required a revisal to be able to repeat verbatim. If not literally so, his deviations were generally improvements. This was the case, in some respects, in Shenstone's poem of "The Inn," which I learned from hearing Dr. Johnson repeat it; and I was surprised, on seeing it lately among the author's works for the first time, to find it so different. One stanza he seems to have extemporised himself:—

"And once again I shape my way
Through rain, through shine, through thick and thin,
Secure to meet, at close of day,
A kind reception at an inn."[2]

He always read amazingly quick, glancing his eye from the top to the bottom of the page in an instant. If he made any pause, it was a compliment to the work; and, after seesawing over it a few minutes, generally repeated the passage, especially if it was poetry.

One day, on taking up Pope's "Essay on Man," a particular passage seemed more than ordinarily to engage his attention; so much so, indeed, that, contrary to his usual custom, after he had left the book and the seat in which he was sitting, he returned to revise it, turning over the pages with anxiety to find it, and then repeated—

"Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair
List under Reason, and deserve her care;
Those that, imparted, court a nobler aim,
Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name."

His task, probably, was the whole paragraph, but these lines only were audible.

[1] Johnson paid the first of those stanzas the great and undeserved compliment of quoting it in his Dictionary, under the word "QUATRAIN."—*C.*

[2] See vol. ii., p. 268.

He seemed much to delight in reciting verses, particularly from Pope. Among the many I have had the pleasure of hearing him recite, the conclusion of the "Dunciad," and his "Epistle to Jervas," seemed to claim his highest admiration:—

> "Led by some rule that guides, but not constrains,
> And finish'd more through happiness than pains,"[1]

he used to remark, was a union that constituted the ultimate degree of excellence in the fine arts.

Two lines from Pope's "Universal Prayer" I have heard him quote, in very serious conversation, as his theological creed:—

> "And binding Nature fast in fate,
> Left free the human will."

Some lines also he used to repeat in his best manner, written in memory of Bishop Boulter,[2] which I believe are not much known:—

> "Some write their wrongs in marble: he, more just,
> Stoop'd down serene and wrote them in the dust;
> Trod under foot, the sport of every wind,
> Swept from the earth, and blotted from his mind.
> There, secret in the grave, he bade them lie,
> And grieved they could not 'scape the Almighty's eye."

Of Goldsmith's "Traveller" he used to speak in terms of the highest commendation. A lady[3] I remember, who had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Johnson read it from the beginning to the end on its first coming out, to testify her admiration of it, exclaimed, "I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly."

In having thought so, however, she was by no means singular; an instance of which I am rather inclined to mention, because it involves a remarkable one of Dr. Johnson's ready wit: for this lady, one evening being in a large party, was called upon after supper for her toast, and seeming embarrassed, she was desired to give the ugliest man she knew; and she immediately named Dr. Goldsmith, on which a lady[4] on the other side of the table rose up and reached across to shake hands with her, expressing some desire of being better acquainted with her, it being the first time they had met; on which

[1] Epistle to Jervas.—*Reynolds.*
[2] By Dr. Madden. See vol. i., p. 258.
[3] Miss Reynolds herself.—*C.*
[4] Mrs. Cholmondeley.—*Reynolds.*



Dr. Johnson said, "Thus the ancients, on the commencement of their friendships, used to sacrifice a beast betwixt them."

Sir Joshua, I have often thought, never gave a more striking proof of his excellence in portrait-painting, than in giving dignity to Dr. Goldsmith's countenance, and yet preserving a strong likeness. But he drew after his mind, or rather his genius, if I may be allowed to make that distinction; assimilating the one with his conversation, the other with his works.

Dr. Goldsmith's cast of countenance, and indeed his whole figure from head to foot, impressed every one at first sight with an idea of his being a low mechanic; particularly, I believe, a journeyman tailor. A little concurring instance of this I well remember. One day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, in company with some gentlemen and ladies, he was relating with great indignation an insult he had just received from some gentleman he had accidentally met (I think at a coffee-house). "The fellow," he said, "took me for a tailor!" on which all the party either laughed aloud or showed they suppressed a laugh.

Dr. Johnson seemed to have much more kindness for Goldsmith, than Goldsmith had for him. He always appeared to be overawed by Johnson, particularly when in company with people of any consequence, always as if impressed with some fear of disgrace; and, indeed, well he might. I have been witness to many mortifications he has suffered in Dr. Johnson's company: one day in particular, at Sir Joshua's table, a gentleman to whom he was talking his best stopped him, in the midst of his discourse, with "Hush! hush! Dr. Johnson is going to say something."

At another time, a gentleman who was sitting between Dr. Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith, and with whom he had been disputing, remarked to another, loud enough for Goldsmith to hear him, "That he had a fine time of it, between *Ursa major* and *Ursa minor!*"

Mr. Baretti used to remark, with a smile, that Dr. Johnson always talked his best to the ladies. But, indeed, that was his general practice to all who would furnish him with a subject worthy of his discussion; for, what was very singular in him, he would rarely, if ever, begin any subject himself, but would sit silent till something was particularly addressed to him, and if that happened to lead to any scientific or moral inquiry, his benevolence, I believe, more immediately incited him to expatiate on it for the edification of the ignorant than for any other motive whatever.

One day, on a lady's telling him that she had read Parnell's

"Hermit" with dissatisfaction, for she could not help
thieves and murderers, who were such immediate ministers
of good to man, did not deserve such punishments as o
Dr. Johnson spoke such an eloquent oration, so deeply
as indeed afforded a most striking instance of the tru
observation, but of which, to my great regret, I can gi
rating proof, my memory furnishing me with nothing mo
the general tendency of his arguments, which was
though it might be said that wicked men, as well as t
ministers of God, because in the moral sphere the goo
the evil we suffer are administered to us by man, yet, as
ness could not inspire or influence man to act wicked
contrary, it was his divine property to produce good e
as man was endowed with free-will to act, or to refra
wickedly, with knowledge of good and evil, with
admonish and to direct him to choose the one and r
he was, therefore, as criminal in the sight of God and
deserving punishment for his evil deeds, as if no goo
from them.

And yet, though, to the best of my remembranc
substance of Dr. Johnson's discourse in answer to t
vation, I am rather apprehensive that, in some resp
thought inconsistent with his general assertions, th
nature much more inclined to evil than to good.

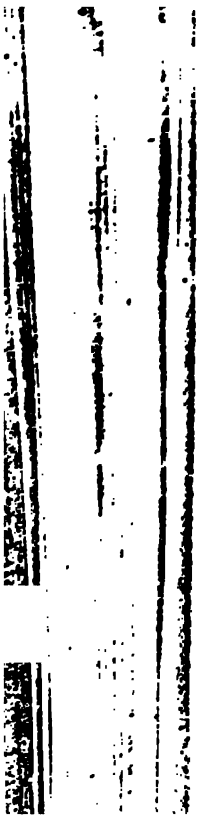
correspond with his thorough conviction of nature's evil propensions; but it might be as likely in consequence of his dread of those peculiar ones, whatever they were, which attended, or rather constituted, his mental malady, which, I have observed, might probably have incited him so often to pray; and I impute it to the same cause, that he so frequently, with great earnestness, desired his intimate acquaintance to pray for him, apparently on very slight occasions of corporeal disorder.

An axiom of his was, that the pains and miseries incident to human life far outweighed its happiness and good. But much may be said in Dr. Johnson's justification, supposing this notion should not meet with universal approbation, he having, it is probable, imbibed it in the early part of his life when under the pressure of adverse fortune, and in every period of it under the still heavier pressure and more adverse influence of Nature herself; for I have often heard him lament that he inherited from his father a morbid disposition both of body and of mind—an oppressive melancholy, which robbed him of the common enjoyments of life.[1]

Indeed, he seemed to struggle almost incessantly with some mental evil, and often, by the expression of his countenance and the motion of his lips, appeared to be offering up some ejaculation to Heaven to remove it. But in Lent, or near the approach of any great festival, he would generally retire from the company to a corner of the room, but most commonly behind a window-curtain, to pray, and with such energy, and in so loud a whisper, that every word was heard distinctly, particularly the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, with which he constantly concluded his devotions. Sometimes some words would emphatically escape him in his usual tone of voice.

Probably his studious attention to the secret workings of his peculiar mental infirmity, together with his experience of divine assistance co-operating with his reasoning faculties, to repel its force, may have proved in the highest degree conducive to the exaltation of his piety, and the pre-eminence of his wisdom. And I think it equally probable, that all his natural defects were conducive to that end; for being so peculiarly debarred from the enjoyment of those amusements which the eye and the ear afford, doubtless he sought more assiduously for those gratifications which scientific pursuits or philosophic meditation bestow.

[1] This last paragraph was originally written, "terrifying melancholy, which he was sometimes apprehensive bordered on insanity." This Miss Reynolds softened into the remark as it stands above.—*C.*



most eminent degree, and I should have thought
sistency indeed in his character, had he really v
music; but as a proof that he did not, I think I h
tion, that he was remarkably fond of Dr. Bur
Music," and that he said it showed that the autl
philosophy of music better than any man that e
subject.

It is certain that, when in the company of c
conversation has turned chiefly upon the merit
charms of painting, perhaps of pictures that were
their inspection, Dr. Johnson, I have thought, us
conscious of his unbecoming situation, or rather
picious that it was an unbecoming situation.

But it was observable, that he rather avoided t
for when asked his opinion of the likeness of any p
he has generally evaded the question, and if oblige
has held the picture most ridiculously, quite close
he held his book. But he was so unwilling to e
that he was much displeased with Sir Joshua, I re
ing him with his book held in that manner, which,
cause of that picture being left unfinished."[1]

On every occasion that had the least tende
religion or morality, he totally disregarded all form
breeding, as utterly unworthy of the slightest con
must be confessed, that he sometimes suffered this
transgress its due bounds, and to extend even to tl
wise connected with the person who had offended

were Mr. Wilkes's brother, Israel, and his lady. In the course of conversation, Mr. Israel Wilkes was about to make some remark, when Johnson suddenly stopped him with, "I hope, Sir, what you are going to say may be better worth hearing than what you have already said." This rudeness shocked and spread a gloom over the whole party, particularly as Mr. Israel Wilkes was a gentleman of a very amiable character and of refined taste, and, what Dr. Johnson little suspected, a very loyal subject. Johnson afterwards owned to me that he was very sorry that he had "*snubbed* Wilkes, as his wife was present." I replied that he should be sorry for many reasons. "No," said Johnson, who was very reluctant to apologize for offences of this nature; "no, I only regret it because his wife was by." I believe that he had no kind of motive for this incivility to Mr. I. Wilkes but disgust at his brother's political principles.

His treatment of Mr. Israel Wilkes was mild in comparison of what a gentleman [1] met with from him one day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, a barrister at law and a man of fashion, who, on discoursing with Dr. (then Mr.) Johnson on the laws and government of different nations (I remember particularly those of Venice), and happening to speak of them in terms of high approbation: "Yes, Sir," says Johnson, "all republican rascals think as you do." How the conversation ended I have forgot, it was so many years ago; but that he made no apology to the gentleman I am very sure, nor to any person present, for such an outrage against society.

Of latter years he grew much more companionable, and I have heard him say, that he knew himself to be so. "In my younger days," he would say, "it is true I was much inclined to treat mankind with asperity and contempt; but I found it answered no good end. I thought it wiser and better to take the world as it goes. Besides, as I have advanced in life I have had more reason to be satisfied with it. Mankind have treated me with more kindness, and of course I have more kindness for them."

In the latter part of his life, indeed, his circumstances were very different from what they were in the beginning. Before he had the pension, he literally dressed like a beggar; and from what I have been told, he as literally lived as such; at least as to common conveniences in his apartments, wanting even a chair to sit on, particularly in his study, where a gentleman who frequently visited him whilst writing his "Idlers" constantly found him at his desk, sitting on

[1] Mr. Elliot.—*Reynolds.*

one with three legs; and on rising from it, he remarked that Dr. Johnson never forgot its defect, but would either hold it in his hand or place it with great composure against some support, taking no notice of its imperfection to his visitor. Whether the visitor sat on a chair, or on a pile of folios, or how he sat, I never remember to have been told.

He particularly piqued himself upon his nice observance of ceremonious punctilios towards ladies. A remarkable instance of this was his never suffering any lady to walk from his house to her carriage, through Bolt Court, unattended by himself to hand her into it (at least I have reason to suppose it to be his general custom, from his constant performance of it to those with whom he was the most intimately acquainted); and if any obstacle prevented it from driving off, there he would stand by the door of it, and gather a mob around him; indeed, they would begin to gather the moment he appeared handing the lady down the steps into Fleet Street. But to describe his appearance—his important air—that indeed cannot be described; and his morning habiliments would excite the utmost astonishment in my reader, that a man in his senses could think of stepping outside his door in them, or even to be seen at home. Sometimes he exhibited himself at the distance of eight or ten doors from Bolt Court, to get at the carriage, to the no small diversion of the populace.

His best dress was, in his early times, so very mean, that one afternoon as he was following some ladies up stairs, on a visit to a lady of fashion (Miss Cotterel), the servant, not knowing him, suddenly seized him by the shoulder, and exclaimed, "Where are you going?" striving at the same time to drag him back; but a gentleman[1] who was a few steps behind prevented her from doing or saying more, and Mr. Johnson growled all the way upstairs, as well he might. He seemed much chagrined and discomposed. Unluckily, whilst in this humour, a lady of high rank happening to call upon Miss Cotterel, he was most violently offended with her for not introducing him to her ladyship, and still more so for her seeming to show more attention to her than to him. After sitting some time silent, meditating how to *down* Miss Cotterel, he addressed himself to Mr. Reynolds, who sat next him, and, after a few introductory words, with a loud voice said, "I wonder which of us two could get most money at his trade in one week, were we to work hard at it from morning till night." I don't

[1] Sir Joshua (then Mr.) Reynolds.—*C.*

remember the answer; but I know that the lady, rising soon after, went away without knowing what trade they were of. She might probably suspect Mr. Johnson to be a poor author by his dress; and because the trade of neither a blacksmith, a porter, or a chairman, which she probably would have taken him for in the street, was not quite so suitable to the place she saw him in. This incident he used to mention with great glee—how he had *downed* Miss Cotterel, though at the same time he professed a great friendship and esteem for that lady.

It is certain, for such kind of mortifications, he never expressed any concern; but on other occasions he has shown an amiable sorrow for the offence he has given, particularly if it seemed to involve the slightest disrespect to the church or to its ministers.

I shall never forget with what regret he spoke of the rude reply he made to Dr. Barnard, on his saying that men never improved after the age of forty-five.[1] "That is not true, Sir," said Johnson. "You, who perhaps are forty-eight, may still improve, if you will try: I wish you would set about it; and I am afraid," he added, "there is great room for it;" and this was said in rather a large party of ladies and gentlemen at dinner. Soon after the ladies withdrew from the table, Dr. Johnson followed them, and, sitting down by the lady of the house, he said, "I am very sorry for having spoken so rudely to the dean." "You very well may, Sir." "Yes," he said, "it was highly improper to speak in that style to a minister of the Gospel, and I am the more hurt on reflecting with what mild dignity he received it." When the dean came up into the drawing-room, Dr. Johnson immediately rose from his seat, and made him sit on the sofa by him, and with such a beseeching look for pardon, and with such fond gestures —literally smoothing down his arms and his knees—tokens of penitence, which were so graciously received by the dean as to make Dr. Johnson very happy, and not a little added to the esteem and respect he had previously entertained for his character.

The next morning the dean called on Sir Joshua Reynolds with the following verses:—

"I lately thought no man alive
Could e'er improve past forty-five,
And ventured to assert it.
The observation was not new,
But seem'd to me so just and true
That none could controvert it.

[1] See Life, iii., 235.



BY MISS REYNOLDS.

"'No, Sir,' says Johnson, 'tis not so;
'Tis your mistake, and I can show
An instance, if you doubt it.
You, who perhaps are forty-eight,
May still improve, 'tis not too late:
I wish you'd set about it.'

"Encouraged thus to mend my faults,
I turn'd his counsel in my thoughts
Which way I could apply it;
Genius I knew was past my reach,
For who can learn what none can teach?
And wit—I could not buy it.

"Then come, my friends, and try your ski
You may improve me if you will,
(My books are at a distance);
With you I'll live and learn, and then
Instead of books I shall read men,
So lend me your assistance.

"Dear knight of Plympton,[1] teach me ho
To suffer with unclouded brow
And smile serene as thine,
The jest uncouth and truth severe;
Like thee to turn my deafest ear,
And calmly drink my wine.

"Thou say'st not only skill is gain'd,
But genius, too, may be attain'd,
By studious invitation;
Thy temper mild, thy genius fine





"Let Johnson teach me how to place
In fairest light each borrow'd grace;
From him I'll learn to write;
Copy his free and easy style,
And from the roughness of his file
Grow, like himself, polite."

Talking on the subject of scepticism, he said, "The eyes of the mind are like the eyes of the body; they can see only at such a distance: but because we cannot see beyond this point, is there nothing beyond it?"

Talking of the want of memory, he said, "No, Sir, it is not true; in general every person has an equal capacity for reminiscence, and for one thing as well as another, otherwise it would be like a person complaining that he could hold silver in his hand, but could not hold copper."

"No, Sir," he once said, "people are not born with a particular genius for particular employments or studies, for it would be like saying that a man could see a great way east, but could not west. It is good sense applied with diligence to what was at first a mere accident, and which, by great application, grew to be called, by the generality of mankind, a particular genius."

Some person advanced, that a lively imagination disqualified the mind from fixing steadily upon objects which required serious and minute investigation. JOHNSON. "It is true, Sir, a vivacious quick imagination does sometimes give a confused idea of things, and which do not fix deep, though, at the same time, he has a capacity to fix them in his memory, if he would endeavour at it. It being like a man that, when he is running, does not make observations on what he meets with, and consequently is not impressed by them; but he has, nevertheless, the power of stopping and informing himself."

A gentleman was mentioning it as a remark of an acquaintance of his, "that he never knew but one person that was completely wicked." JOHNSON. "Sir, I don't know what you mean by a person completely wicked." GENTLEMAN. "Why, any one that has entirely got rid of all shame." JOHNSON. "How is he, then, completely wicked? He must get rid, too, of all conscience." GENTLEMAN. "I think conscience and shame the same thing." JOHNSON. "I am surprised to hear you say so; they spring from two different sources, and are distinct perceptions: one respects this world, the other the next." A LADY. "I think, however, that a person who has got rid of shame is in a fair way to get rid of conscience." JOHNSON. "Yes, 'tis a part

of the way, I grant; but there are degrees at which men stop, some for the fear of men, some for the fear of God: shame arises from the fear of men, conscience from the fear of God."

Dr. Johnson seemed to delight in drawing characters; and when he did so *con amore*, delighted every one that heard him. Indeed, I cannot say I ever heard him draw any *con odio*, though he professed himself to be, or at least to love, a *good hater*. But I have remarked that his dislike of any one seldom prompted him to say much more than that the fellow is a *blockhead*, a *poor creature*, or some such epithet. I shall never forget the exalted character he drew of his friend Mr. Langton, nor with what energy, what fond delight, he expatiated in his praise, giving him every excellence that nature could bestow, and every perfection that humanity could acquire. A literary lady was present, Miss Hannah More, who perhaps inspired him with an unusual ardour to shine, which indeed he did with redoubled lustre, deserving himself the praises he bestowed: not but I have often heard him speak in terms equally high of Mr. Langton, though more concisely expressed.

On the praises of Mrs. Thrale he used to dwell with a peculiar delight, a paternal fondness, expressive of conscious exultation in being so intimately acquainted with her. One day, in speaking of her to Mr. Harris, author of "Hermes," and expatiating on her various perfections,—the solidity of her virtues, the brilliancy of her wit, and the strength of her understanding, &c.—he quoted some lines (a stanza, I believe, but from what author I know not), with which he concluded his most eloquent eulogium, and of these I retained but the two last lines:[1]—

> "Virtues—of such a generous kind,
> Good in the last recesses of the mind."

It will doubtless appear highly paradoxical to the generality of the world to say, that few men, in his ordinary disposition, or common frame of mind, could be more inoffensive than Dr. Johnson; yet surely those who knew his uniform benevolence, and its actuating principles—steady virtue, and true holiness—will readily agree with me, that peace and good-will towards man were the natural emanations of his heart.

I shall never forget the impression I felt in Dr. Johnson's favour, the first time I was in his company, on his saying, that as he returned to

[1] Being so particularly engaged as not to be able to attend to them sufficiently.—*Miss Reynolds.*

his lodgings, at one or two o'clock in the morning, he often saw poor children asleep on thresholds and stalls, and that he used to put pennies into their hands to buy them a breakfast.

He always carried a religious treatise in his pocket on a Sunday, and he used to encourage me to relate to him the particular parts of Scripture I did not understand, and to write them down as they occurred to me in reading the Bible.

When repeating to me one day Grainger's "Ode on Solitude," I shall never forget the concordance of the sound of his voice with the grandeur of those images; nor, indeed, the gothic dignity of his aspect, his look and manner, when repeating sublime passages. But what was very remarkable, though his cadence in reading poetry was so judiciously emphatical as to give additional force to the words uttered, yet in reading prose, particularly on common or familiar subjects, narrations, essays, letters, &c., nothing could be more injudicious than his manner, beginning every period with a pompous accent, and reading it with a whine, or with a kind of spasmodic struggle for utterance; and this, not from any natural infirmity, but from a strange singularity, in reading on, in one breath, as if he had made a resolution not to respire till he had closed the sentence.

I believe no one has described his extraordinary gestures or antics with his hands and feet, particularly when passing over the threshold of a door, or rather before he would venture to pass through any doorway. On entering Sir Joshua's house with poor Mrs. Williams, a blind lady who lived with him, he would quit her hand, or else whirl her about on the steps as he whirled and twisted about to perform his gesticulations; and as soon as he had finished, he would give a sudden spring, and make such an extensive stride over the threshold, as if he was trying for a wager how far he could stride, Mrs. Williams standing groping about outside the door, unless the servant took hold of her hand to conduct her in, leaving Dr. Johnson to perform at the parlour door much the same exercise over again.

But it was not only at the entrance of a door that he exhibited such strange manœuvres, but across a room, or in the street with company, he has stopped on a sudden, as if he had recollected his task, and began to perform it there, gathering a mob round him; and when he had finished would hasten to his companion (who probably had walked on before) with an air of great satisfaction that he had done his duty.

One Sunday morning, as I was walking with him in Twickenham meadows, he began his antics both with his feet and hands, with the

latter as if he was holding the reins of a horse like a jockey on full speed. But to describe the strange positions of his feet is a difficult task; sometimes he would make the back part of his heels to touch, sometimes his toes, as if he was aiming at making the form of a triangle, at least the two sides of one. Though indeed, whether these were his gestures on this particular occasion in Twickenham meadows I do not recollect, it is so long since; but I well remember that they were so extraordinary that men, women, and children gathered round him, laughing. At last we sat down on some logs of wood by the river side, and they nearly dispersed; when he pulled out of his pocket Grotius "*De Veritate Religionis*," over which he seesawed at such a violent rate as to excite the curiosity of some people at a distance to come and see what was the matter with him.

We drank tea that afternoon at Sir John Hawkins's, and on our return I was surprised to hear Dr. Johnson's minute criticism on Lady Hawkins's dress, with every part of which almost he found fault. It was amazing, so short-sighted as he was, how very observant he was of appearances in dress and behaviour, nay, even of the deportment of servants while waiting at table. One day, as his man Frank was attending at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, he observed, with some emotion, that he had placed the salver under his arm. Nor would the conduct of the company, blind as he was to his own many and strange peculiarities, escape his animadversion on some occasions. He thought the use of water-glasses a strange perversion of the idea of refinement, and had a great dislike to the use of a pocket-handkerchief at meals, when, if he happened to have occasion for one, he would rise from his chair and go to some distance, with his back to the company, and perform the operation as silently as possible.

Few people, I have heard him say, understood the art of carving better than himself; but that it would be highly indecorous in him to attempt it in company, being so near-sighted, that it required a suspension of his breath during the operation.

It must be owned, indeed, that it was to be regretted that he did not practise a little of that delicacy in eating, for he appeared to want breath more at that time than usual. It is certain that he did not appear to the best advantage at the hour of repast; but of this he was perfectly unconscious, owing probably to his being totally ignorant of the characteristic expressions of the human countenance, and therefore he could have no conception that his own expressed when most pleased any thing displeasing to others; for though, when particularly directing his attention towards any object to spy out

defects or perfections, he generally succeeded better than most men; partly, perhaps, from a desire to excite admiration of his perspicacity, of which he was not a little ambitious—yet I have heard him say, and I have often perceived, that he could not distinguish any man's face half a yard distant from him, not even his most intimate acquaintance.

That Dr. Johnson possessed the essential principles of politeness and of good taste (which I suppose are the same, at least concomitant), none who knew his virtues and his genius will, I imagine, be disposed to dispute. But why they remained with him, like gold in the ore, unfashioned and unseen, except in his literary capacity, no person that I know of has made any inquiry, though in general it has been spoken of as an unaccountable inconsistency in his character. Much, too, may be said in excuse for an apparent asperity of manners which was, at times at least, the natural effect of those inherent mental infirmities to which he was subject. His corporeal defects also contributed largely to the singularity of his manners; and a little reflection on the disqualifying influence of blindness and deafness would suggest many apologies for Dr. Johnson's want of politeness.

The particular instance I have just mentioned, of his inability to discriminate the features of any one's face, deserves perhaps more than any other to be taken into consideration, wanting, as he did, the aid of those intelligent signs, or insinuations, which the countenance displays in social converse; and which, in their slightest degree, influence and regulate the manners of the polite, or even the common observer. And to his defective hearing, perhaps, his unaccommodating manners may be equally ascribed, which not only precluded him from the perception of the expressive tones of the voice of others, but from hearing the boisterous sound of his own: and nothing, I believe, more conduced to fix upon his character the general stigma of ill-breeding, than his loud imperious tone of voice, which apparently heightened the slightest dissent to a tone of harsh reproof; and, with his corresponding aspect, had an intimidating influence on those who were not much acquainted with him, and excited a degree of resentment which his words in ordinary circumstances would not have provoked. I have often heard him on such occasions express great surprise, that what he had said could have given any offence.

Under such disadvantages, it was not much to be wondered at that Dr. Johnson should have committed many blunders and absurdities, and excited surprise and resentment in company; one in particular I

remember. Being in company with Mr. Garrick a
who were unknown to Dr. Johnson, he was saying s
to the disparagement of the character or of the work
present—I have forgot which; on which Mr. Gar
foot under the table; but he still went on, and
alarmed, touched him a second time, and, I belie
last Johnson exclaimed, "David, David, is it yo
you tread on my toes so?" This little anecdote, I
as much the want of prudence in Dr. Johnson as t
But had he at first seen Garrick's expressive c
(probably) the embarrassment of the rest of the
occasion, it doubtless would not have happened.

It were also much to be wished, in justice
character for good manners, that many *jocular* and
which have been reported had been noted *as such*, t
of those who were unacquainted with him.

Dr. Johnson was very ambitious of excelling in
ments, as well as the uncommon, and particularly i
One day, as he was walking in Gunisbury Park (
some gentlemen and ladies, who were admiring
size of some of the trees, one of the gentlemen ren
he was a boy, he made nothing of climbing (*swar*
the phrase) the largest there. "Why, I can swar
Dr. Johnson, which excited a hearty laugh—(he
fifty and sixty); on which he ran to the tree, clun



justly can that he was "in affections mild," benevolent, and compassionate; and to this combination of character may, I believe, be ascribed, in a great measure, his extraordinary celebrity; his being beheld as a phenomenon or wonder of the age.

And yet Dr. Johnson's character, singular as it certainly was from the contrast of his mental endowments with the roughness of his manners, was, I believe, perfectly natural and consistent throughout; and to those who were intimately acquainted with him must, I imagine, have appeared so. For being totally devoid of all deceit, free from every tinge of affectation or ostentation, and unwarped by any vice, his singularities, those strong lights and shades that so peculiarly distinguish his character, may the more easily be traced to their primary and natural causes.

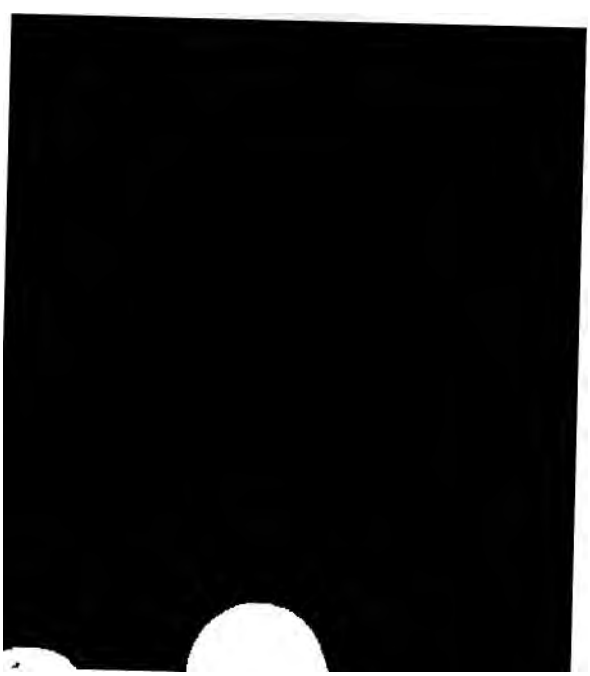
The luminous parts of his character, his soft affections, and I should suppose his strong intellectual powers, at least the dignified charm or radiancy of them, must be allowed to owe their origin to his strict, his rigid principles of religion and virtue; and the shadowy parts of his character, his rough, unaccommodating manners, were in general to be ascribed to those corporeal defects that I have already observed naturally tended to darken his perceptions of what may be called propriety and impropriety in general conversation; and of course in the ceremonious or artificial sphere of society gave his deportment so contrasting an aspect to the apparent softness and general uniformity of cultivated manners.

And perhaps the joint influence of these two primeval causes, his intellectual excellence and his corporeal defects, mutually contributed to give his manners a greater degree of harshness than they would have had if only under the influence of one of them; the imperfect perceptions of the one not unfrequently producing misconceptions in the other.

Besides these, many other equally natural causes concurred to constitute the singularity of Dr. Johnson's character. Doubtless, the progress of his education had a double tendency to brighten and to obscure it. But I must observe, that this obscurity (implying only his awkward uncouth appearance, his ignorance of the rules of politeness, &c.) would have gradually disappeared at a more advanced period, at least could have had no manner of influence to the prejudice of Dr. Johnson's character, had it not been associated with those corporeal defects above mentioned. But, unhappily, his untaught, uncivilized manner seemed to render every little indecorum or impropriety that he committed doubly indecorous and improper.



SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS ON CHARACTER.

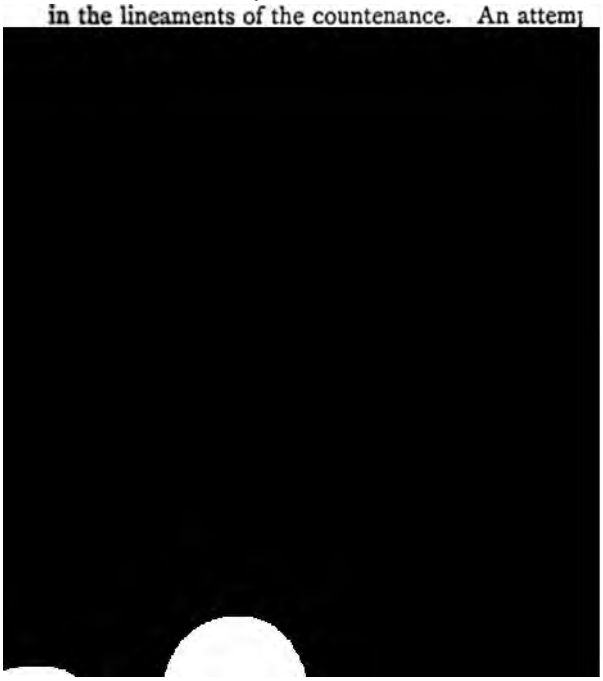




SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS ON CHARACTER.

I HAVE been favoured by Miss Gwatkin with lowing paper by Sir Joshua on the character of to some mutual friend, perhaps Malone (or Bos Reynolds wrote, like everything he painted, was alterations and corrections before its appearance i transcribed the paper exactly, except in the mat and in the introduction, now and then, of a word, to complete the sense.[2]

"From thirty years' intimacy with Dr. Johnso had the means, if I had equally the ability, of giv perfect idea of the character and peculiarities of man. The habits of my profession unluckily exte tion of so much only of character as lies on the surf in the lineaments of the countenance. An attem



by any man. It has been frequently observed that he was a singular instance of a man who had so much distinguished himself by his writings that his conversation not only supported his character as an author, but, in the opinion of many, was superior. Those who have lived with the wits of the age know how rarely this happens. I have had the habit of thinking that this quality, as well as others of the same kind, are possessed in consequence of accidental circumstances attending his life. What Dr. Johnson said a few days before his death of his disposition to insanity was no new discovery to those who were intimate with him. The character of Imlac in 'Rasselas,' I always considered as a comment on his own conduct which he himself practised, and as it now appears very successfully, since we know he continued to possess his understanding in its full vigour to the last. Solitude to him was horror; nor would he ever trust himself alone but when employed in writing or reading. He has often begged me to go home with him to prevent his being alone in the coach. Any company was better than none; by which he connected himself with many mean persons whose presence he could command. For this purpose he established a Club at a little alehouse in Essex Street, composed of a strange mixture of very learned and very ingenious odd people. Of the former were Dr. Heberden, Mr. Windham, Mr. Boswell, Mr. Stevens, Mr. Paradise. Those of the latter I do not think proper to enumerate. By thus living, by necessity, so much in company, more perhaps than any other studious man whatever, he had acquired by habit, and which habit alone can give, that facility, and we may add docility of mind, by which he was so much distinguished. Another circumstance likewise contributed not a little to the power which he had of expressing himself, which was a rule, which he said he always practised on every occasion, of speaking his best, whether the person to whom he addressed himself was or was not capable of comprehending him. 'If,' says he, 'I am understood, my labour is not lost. If it is above their comprehension, there is some gratification, though it is the admiration of ignorance;' and he said those were the most sincere admirers; and quoted Baxter, who made a rule never to preach a sermon without saying something which he knew was beyond the comprehension of his audience in order to inspire their admiration. Dr. Johnson, by this continual practice, made that a habit which was at first an exertion; for every person who knew him must have observed that the moment he was left out of the conversation, whether from his deafness or from whatever cause, but a few minutes without speaking or listening, his mind appeared

to be preparing itself. He fell into a reverie accompanied with strange antic gestures; but this he never did when his mind was engaged by the conversation. [These were] therefore improperly called by ——, as well as by others, convulsions, which imply involuntary contortions; whereas, a word addressed to him, his attention was recovered. Sometimes, indeed, it would be near a minute before he would give an answer, looking as if he laboured to bring his mind to bear on the question.

"In arguing he did not trouble himself with much circumlocution, but opposed, directly and abruptly, his antagonist. He fought with all sorts [of] weapons; [with] ludicrous comparisons and similies; [and] if all failed, with rudeness and overbearing. He thought it necessary never to be worsted in argument. He had one virtue which I hold one of the most difficult to practise. After the heat of contest was over, if he had been informed that his antagonist resented his rudeness, he was the first to seek after a reconciliation; and of his virtues the most distinguished was his love of truth.

"He sometimes, it must be confessed, covered his ignorance by generals rather than appear ignorant. You will wonder to hear a person who loved him so sincerely speak thus freely of his friend, but, you must recollect I am not writing his panegyrick, but as if upon oath, not only to give the truth but the whole truth.

"His pride had no meanness in it; there was nothing little or mean about him.

"Truth, whether in great or little matters, he held sacred.

"From the violation of truth, he said, in great things your character or your interest was affected, in lesser things your pleasure is equally destroyed. I remember, on his relating some incident, I added something to his relation which I supposed might likewise have happened: 'It would have been a better story,' says he, 'if it had been so; but it was not.' Our friend Dr. Goldsmith was not so scrupulous; but he said he only indulged himself in white lyes, light as feathers, which he threw up in the air, and on whomever they fall, nobody was hurt. 'I wish,' says Dr. Johnson, 'you would take the trouble of moulting your feathers.'

"I once inadvertently put him in a situation from which none but a man of perfect integrity could extricate himself. I pointed at some lines in the 'Traveller' which I told [him] I was sure he wrote. He hesitated a little; during this hesitation I recollected myself, that as I knew he would not lye I put him in a cleft stick, and should have had but my due if he had given me a rough answer; but he only said,

'Sir, I did not write them, but that you may not imagine that I have wrote more than I really have, the utmost I have wrote in that poem, to the best of my recollection, is not more than eighteen lines.' It must be observed there was then an opinion about town that Dr. Johnson wrote the whole poem for his friend, who was then in a manner an unknown writer. This conduct appears to me to be in the highest degree correct and refined. If the Dr.'s conscience would have let him told a lye, the matter would have been soon over.

"As in his writings not a line can be found which a saint would wish to blot, so in his life he would never suffer the least immorality [or] indecency of conversation, [or any thing] contrary to virtue or piety to proceed without a severe check, which no elevation of rank exempted them from.

"Custom, or politeness, or courtly manners has authorised such an Eastern hyperbolical style of compliment, that part of Dr. Johnson's character for rudeness of manners must be put to the account of this scrupulous adherence to truth. His obstinate silence, whilst all the company were in raptures, vying with each other who should pepper highest, was considered as rudeness or ill-nature.

"During his last illness, when all hope was at an end, he appeared to be quieter and more resigned. His approaching dissolution was always present to his mind. A few days before he died, Mr. Langton and myself only present, he said he had been a great sinner, but he hoped he had given no bad example to his friends; that he had some consolation in reflecting that he had never denied Christ, and repeated the text 'Whoever denies me, &c.' We were both very ready to assure him that we were conscious that we were better and wiser from his life and conversation; and that, so far from denying Christ, he had been, in this age, his greatest champion.

"Sometimes a flash of wit escaped him as if involuntary. He was asked how he liked the new man that was hired to watch by him. 'Instead of watching,' says he, 'he sleeps like a dormouse; and when he helps me to bed he is awkward as a turnspit dog the first time he is put into the wheel.'

"The Christian religion was with him such a certain and established truth, that he considered it as a kind of profanation to hold any argument about its truth.

"He was not easily imposed upon by professions to honesty and candour; but he appeared to have little suspicion of hypocrisy in religion.

"His passions were like those of other men, the difference only lay

in his keeping a stricter watch over himself. In petty circumstances this wayward disposition appeared, but in greater things he thought it worth while to summon his recollection and be always on his guard. . . . [To them that loved him not] as rough as winter; to those who sought his love, as mild as summer[1]—many instances will readily occur to those who knew him intimately, of the guard which he endeavoured always to keep over himself.

"The prejudices he had to countries did not extend to individuals. The chief prejudice in which he indulged himself was against Scotland, though he had the most cordial friendship with individuals [of that country.] This he used to vindicate as a duty. In respect to Frenchmen he rather laughed at himself, but it was insurmountable. He considered every foreigner as a fool till they had convinced him of the contrary. Against the Irish he entertained no prejudice, he thought they united themselves very well with us; but the Scotch, when in England, united and made a party by employing only Scotch servants and Scotch tradesmen. He held it right for Englishmen to oppose a party against them.

"This reasoning would have more weight if the numbers were equal. A small body in a larger has such great disadvantages that I fear are scarce counterbalanced by whatever little combination they can make. A general combination against them would be little short of annihilation.

"We are both of Dr. Johnson's school. For my own part, I acknowledge the highest obligations to him. He may be said to have formed my mind, and to have brushed from it a great deal of rubbish. Those very people whom he has brought to think rightly will occasionally criticise the opinions of their master when he nods. But we should always recollect that it is he himself who taught us and enabled us to do it.

"The drawback of his character is entertaining prejudices on very slight foundations; giving an opinion, perhaps, first at random, but from its being contradicted he thinks himself obliged always to support [it], or, if he cannot support, still not to acquiesce [in the opposite opinion]. Of this I remember an instance of a defect or forgetfulness in his 'Dictionary.' I asked him how he came not to correct it in the second edition. 'No,' says he, 'they made so much of it that I would not flatter them by altering it!'

[1] Reynolds here recollects, imperfectly, Cromwell's eulogium on Wolsey:—

"Lofty and sour to them that lov'd him not,
But to the men that sought him sweet as summer."

"From passion, from the prevalence of his disposition for the minute, he was constantly acting contrary to his own reason, to his principles. It was a frequent subject of animadversion with him, how much authors lost of the pleasure and comfort of life by their carrying always about them their own consequence and celebrity. Yet no man in mixed company,—not to his intimates, certainly, for that would be an insupportable slavery,—ever acted with more circumspection to his character than himself. The most light and airy dispute was with him a dispute on the arena. He fought on every occasion as if his whole reputation depended upon the victory of the minute, and he fought with all the weapons. If he was foiled in argument he had recourse to abuse and rudeness. That he was not thus strenuous for victory with his intimates in tête-à-tête conversations when there were no witnesses, may be easily believed. Indeed, had his conduct been to them the same as he exhibited to the public, his friends could never have entertained that love and affection for him which they all feel and profess for his memory.

"But what appears extraordinary is that a man who so well saw, himself, the folly of this ambition of shining, of speaking, or of acting always according to the character [he] imagined [he] possessed in the world, should produce himself the greatest example of a contrary conduct.

"Were I to write the Life of Dr. Johnson I would labour this point, to separate his conduct that proceeded from his passions, and what proceeded from his reason, from his natural disposition seen in his quiet hours."

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS ON JOHNSON'S INFLUENCE.[1]

I REMEMBER Mr. Burke, speaking of the Essays of Sir Francis Bacon, said, he thought them the best of his works. Dr. Johnson was of opinion, that "their excellence and their value consisted in being the observations of a strong mind operating upon life; and in consequence you find there what you seldom find in other books." It is this kind of excellence which gives a value to the performances of artists also. It is the thoughts expressed in the works of Michael Angelo, Correggio, Raffaelle, Parmegiano, and perhaps some of the old Gothic masters, and not the inventions of Pietro da Cortona, Carlo Marati, Luca Giordano, and others, that I might mention, which we seek after with avidity: from the former we learn to think originally.

May I presume to introduce myself on this occasion, and even to mention, as an instance of the truth of what I have remarked, the very Discourses which I have had the honour of delivering from this place? Whatever merit they have, must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr. Johnson. I do not mean to say, though it certainly would be to the credit of these Discourses, if I could say it with truth, that he contributed even a single sentiment to them; but he qualified my mind to think justly. No man had, like him, the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking. Perhaps other men might have equal knowledge; but few were so communicative. His great pleasure was to talk to those who looked up to him. It was here he exhibited his wonderful powers. In mixed company, and frequently in company that *ought* to have looked up to him, many, thinking they had a character for learning to support, considered it as beneath them to

[1] From an unfinished Discourse, found by Mr. Malone among Sir Joshua's loose papers. See Works, vol. i., p. xxviii.

enlist in the train of his auditors; and to such persons he certainly did not appear to advantage, being often impetuous and overbearing.

The desire of shining in conversation was in him, indeed, a predominant passion; and if it must be attributed to vanity, let it at the same time be recollected, that it produced that loquaciousness from which his more intimate friends derived considerable advantage. The observations which he made on poetry, on life, and on every thing about us, I applied to our art; with what success, others must judge. Perhaps an artist in his studies should pursue the same conduct; and, instead of patching up a particular work on the narrow plan of imitation, rather endeavour to acquire the art and power of thinking. On this subject I have often spoken: but it cannot be too often repeated, that the general power of composition may be acquired; and when acquired, the artist may then lawfully take hints from his predecessors. In reality, indeed, it appears to me, that a man must begin by the study of others. Thus Bacon became a great thinker, by first entering into and making himself master of the thoughts of other men.



AN ESSAY

ON

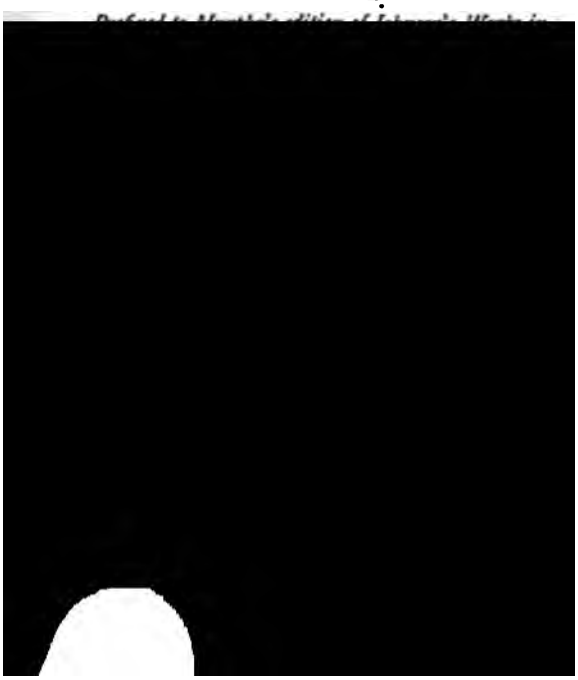
THE LIFE AND GENIUS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON,

BY

ARTHUR MURPHY,





AN ESSAY

ON THE

LIFE AND GENIUS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON,

WHEN the works of a great writer, who h
posterity a lasting legacy, are presented
naturally expected that some account of his life
the edition. The reader wishes to know as much
author. The circumstances that attended him,
private character, his conversation, and the means

of the character should be given; and if this be done with a strict regard to truth, a just estimate of Dr. Johnson will afford a lesson, perhaps, as valuable as the moral doctrine that speaks with energy in every page of his works.

The present writer enjoyed the conversation and friendship of that excellent man more than thirty years. He thought it an honour to be so connected, and to this hour he reflects on his loss with regret; but regret, he knows, has secret bribes, by which the judgment may be influenced, and partial affection may be carried beyond the bounds of truth. In the present case, however, nothing needs to be disguised, and exaggerated praise is unnecessary. It is an observation of the younger Pliny, in his epistle to his friend Tacitus, that history ought never to magnify matters of fact, because worthy actions require nothing but the truth: "nam nec historia debet egredi veritatem, et honeste factis veritas sufficit." This rule, the present biographer promises, shall guide his pen throughout the following narrative.

It may be said, the death of Dr. Johnson kept the public mind in agitation beyond all former example. No literary character ever excited so much attention; and, when the press has teemed with anecdotes, apophthegms, essays, and publications of every kind, what occasion now for a new tract on the same threadbare subject? The plain truth shall be the answer. The proprietors of Johnson's works thought the life, which they prefixed to their former edition, too unwieldy for republication. The prodigious variety of foreign matter, introduced into that performance, seemed to overload the memory of Dr. Johnson, and, in the account of his own life, to leave him hardly visible. They wished to have a more concise, and, for that reason, perhaps, a more satisfactory account, such as may exhibit a just picture of the man, and keep him the principal figure in the foreground of his own picture. To comply with that request is the design of this essay, which the writer undertakes with a trembling hand. He has no discoveries, no secret anecdotes, no occasional controversy, no sudden flashes of wit and humour, no private conversation, and no new facts, to embellish his work. Every thing has been gleaned. Dr. Johnson said of himself, "I am not uncandid, nor severe: I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest, and people are apt to think me serious."[1] The exercise of that privilege, which is enjoyed by every man in society, has not been allowed to him. His fame has given importance even to trifles; and the zeal of his friends has

[1] See Life, vol. iii., p. 338.—*Editor.*

brought every thing to light. What should be related, and what should not, has been published without distinction: "dicenda tacenda locuti!" Every thing that fell from him has been caught with eagerness by his admirers, who, as he says in one of his letters, have acted with the diligence of spies upon his conduct. To some of them the following lines, in Mallet's poem on verbal criticism, are not inapplicable:—

> "Such that grave bird in northern seas is found,
> Whose name a Dutchman only knows to sound;
> Where'er the king of fish moves on before,
> This humble friend attends from shore to shore;
> With eye still earnest, and with bill inclined,
> He picks up what his patron drops behind,
> With those choice cates his palate to regale,
> And is the careful Tibbald of a whale."

After so many essays and volumes of Johnsoniana, what remains for the present writer? Perhaps, what has not been attempted; a short, yet full, a faithful, yet temperate, history of Johnson.

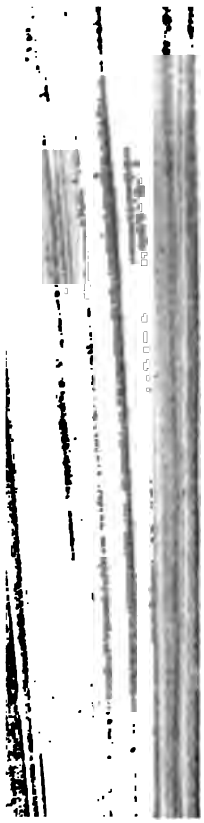
SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield, September 7, 1709, O. S.[1] His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller in that city; a man of large, athletic make, and violent passions; wrong-headed, positive, and, at times, afflicted with a degree of melancholy, little short of madness. His mother was sister to Dr. Ford, a practising physician, and father of Cornelius Ford, generally known by the name of parson Ford, the same who is represented near the punch-bowl in Hogarth's Midnight Modern Conversation. In the life of Fenton, Johnson says, that "his abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise." Being chaplain to the earl of Chesterfield, he wished to attend that nobleman on his embassy to the Hague. Colley Cibber has recorded the anecdote. "You should go," said the witty peer, "if to your many vices you would add one more." "Pray, my lord, what is that?" "Hypocrisy, my dear doctor." Johnson had a younger brother named Nathaniel, who died at the age of twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Michael Johnson, the father, was chosen, in the year 1718, under bailiff of Lichfield; and, in the year 1725, he served the office of the

[1] This appears in a note to Johnson's Diary, prefixed to the first of his prayers. After the alteration of the style, he kept his birthday on the 18th of September, and it is accordingly marked September $\frac{7}{18}$.

senior bailiff. He had a brother of the name of Andrew, who, for some years, kept the ring at Smithfield, appropriated to wrestlers and boxers. Our author used to say, that he was never thrown or conquered. Michael, the father, died December 1731, at the age of seventy-six: his mother at eighty-nine, of a gradual decay, in the year 1759. Of the family nothing more can be related worthy of notice. Johnson did not delight in talking of his relations. "There is little pleasure," he said to Mrs. Piozzi, "in relating the anecdotes of beggary."

Johnson derived from his parents, or from an unwholesome nurse, the distemper called the king's evil. The Jacobites at that time believed in the efficacy of the royal touch, and, accordingly, Mrs. Johnson presented her son, when two years old, before queen Anne, who, for the first time, performed that office, and communicated to her young patient all the healing virtue in her power.[1] He was afterwards cut for that scrophulous humour, and the under part of his face was seamed and disfigured by the operation. It is supposed, that this disease deprived him of the sight of his left eye, and also impaired his hearing. At eight years old, he was placed under Mr. Hawkins, at the free school in Lichfield, where he was not remarkable for diligence or regular application. Whatever he read, his tenacious memory made his own. In the fields, with his schoolfellows, he talked more to himself than with his companions. In 1725, when he was about sixteen years old, he went on a visit to his cousin Cornelius Ford, who detained him for some months, and, in the mean time, assisted him in the classics. The general direction for his studies, which he then received, he related to Mrs. Piozzi. "Obtain," says Ford, "some general principles of every science: he who can only talk on one subject, or act only in one department, is seldom wanted, and, perhaps, never wished for; while the man of general knowledge can often benefit, and always please." This advice Johnson seems to have pursued with a good inclination. His reading was always desultory, seldom resting on any particular author, but rambling from one book to another, and, by hasty snatches, hoarding up a variety of knowledge. It may be proper, in this place, to mention another general rule laid down by Ford for Johnson's future

[1] The impression which this interview left on Johnson's fancy, is recorded by Mrs. Piozzi in her anecdotes (p. 8); and Johnson's description of it is picturesque and poetical. Being asked if he could remember queen Anne, "he had (he said) a confused, but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds, and a long black hood."—*Wallsby.*



coming to their growth." That ingenious lady vivacity, "Can one, on such an occasion, forbea diction of Boileau's father, who said, stroking tl satirist, 'this little man has not too much wit, b ill of any one?'"

On Johnson's return from Cornelius Ford master of the free school at Lichfield, refused to that foundation. At this distance of time, wha is vain to inquire; but to refuse assistance t genius must be pronounced harsh and illiberal. stop the progress of the young student's educa at another school, at Stourbridge in Worcestersl Mr. Wentworth. Having gone through the literature, he returned to his father's house, and for the trade of a bookseller. He has been hear bind a book. At the end of two years, being th went to assist the studies of a young gentler Corbet, to the university of Oxford; and on 1728, both were entered of Pembroke college; (commoner, and Johnson as a commoner. T Jordan, was a man of no genius; and Johnson early contempt of mean abilities, in one or tw with insolence to that gentleman. Of his ge university there are no particulars that merit translation of Pope's Messiah, which was a coll upon him as a task by Mr. Jordan. Corbet about two years, and Johnson's salary ceased.

General philology, agreeably to his cousin Ford's advice, was the object of his ambition. He received, at that time, an early impression of piety, and a taste for the best authors, ancient and modern. It may, notwithstanding, be questioned whether, except his bible, he ever read a book entirely through. Late in life, if any man praised a book in his presence, he was sure to ask, "Did you read it through?" If the answer was in the affirmative, he did not seem willing to believe it. He continued at the university, till the want of pecuniary supplies obliged him to quit the place. He obtained, however, the assistance of a friend, and, returning in a short time, was able to complete a residence of three years. The history of his exploits at Oxford, he used to say, was best known to Dr. Taylor and Dr. Adams. Wonders are told of his memory, and, indeed, all who knew him late in life can witness, that he retained that faculty in the greatest vigour.

From the university, Johnson returned to Lichfield. His father died soon after, December, 1731; and the whole receipt out of his effects, as appeared by a memorandum in the son's handwriting, dated 15th of June, 1732, was no more than twenty pounds.[1] In this exigence, determined that poverty should neither depress his spirits nor warp his integrity, he became under-master of a grammar school at Market Bosworth, in Leicestershire. That resource, however, did not last long. Disgusted by the pride of sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of that little seminary, he left the place in discontent, and ever after spoke of it with abhorrence. In 1733, he went on a visit to Mr. Hector, who had been his schoolfellow, and was then a surgeon at Birmingham, lodging at the house of Warren, a bookseller. At that place Johnson translated a Voyage to Abyssinia, written by Jerome Lobo, a Portuguese missionary. This was the first literary work from the pen of Dr. Johnson. His friend, Hector, was occasionally his amanuensis. The work was, probably, undertaken at the desire of Warren, the bookseller, and was printed at Birmingham; but it appears, in the Literary Magazine, or history of the works of the learned, for March, 1735, that it was published by Bettesworth and Hitch, Paternoster row. It contains a narrative of the endeavours of a company of missionaries to convert the people of Abyssinia to

[1] The entry of this is remarkable for his early resolution to preserve through life a fair and upright character. "1732, Junii 15. Undecim aureos deposui, quo die, quidquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperare licet, viginti scilicet libras, accepi. Usque adeo mihi mea fortuna fingenda est. Interea, ne paupertate vires animi languescant, nec in flagitia egestas abigat, cavendum."

the church of Rome. In the preface to this work, Johnson observes, "that the Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general view of his countrymen, has amused his readers with no romantic absurdities, or incredible fictions. He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things, as he saw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks, that destroy with their eyes; his crocodiles devour their prey, without tears; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants. The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blessed with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom, or unceasing sunshine; nor are the nations, here described, either void of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private and social virtues; here are no Hottentots without religion, polity, or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite, and completely skilled in all sciences; he will discover, what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that, wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced, in most countries, their particular inconveniences, by particular favours."——We have here an early specimen of Johnson's manner; the vein of thinking, and the frame of the sentences, are manifestly his: we see the infant Hercules. The translation of Lobo's narrative has been reprinted lately (1792) in a separate volume, with some other tracts of Dr. Johnson's, but a compendious account of so interesting a work as father Lobo's discovery of the head of the Nile, will not, it is imagined, be unacceptable to the reader.

"Father Lobo, the Portuguese missionary, embarked, in 1622, in the same fleet with the Count Vidigueira, who was appointed, by the king of Portugal, viceroy of the Indies. They arrived at Goa; and, in January, 1624, father Lobo set out on the mission to Abyssinia. Two of the jesuits, sent on the same commission, were murdered in their attempt to penetrate into that empire. Lobo had better success; he surmounted all difficulties, and made his way into the heart of the country. Then follows a description of Abyssinia, formerly the largest empire of which we have an account in history. It extended from the Red sea to the kingdom of Congo, and from Egypt to the Indian sea, containing no less than forty provinces. At the time of Lobo's mission, it was not much larger than Spain, consisting then but of five kingdoms, of which part was entirely subject to the

emperour, and part paid him a tribute, as an acknowledgment. The provinces were inhabited by Moors, Pagans, Jews, and Christians. The last was, in Lobo's time, the established and reigning religion. The diversity of people and religion is the reason why the kingdom was under different forms of government, with laws and customs extremely various. Some of the people neither sowed their lands, nor improved them by any kind of culture, living upon milk and flesh, and, like the Arabs, encamping without any settled habitation. In some places they practised no rites of worship, though they believed that, in the regions above, there dwells a being that governs the world. This deity they call, in their language, Oul. The christianity, professed by the people in some parts, is so corrupted with superstitions, errours, and heresies, and so mingled with ceremonies borrowed from the Jews, that little, besides the name of christianity, is to be found among them. The Abyssins cannot properly be said to have either cities or houses; they live in tents or cottages made of straw or clay, very rarely building with stone. Their villages, or towns, consist of these huts; yet even of such villages they have but few, because the grandees, the viceroys, and the emperour himself, are always in camp, that they may be prepared, upon the most sudden alarm, to meet every emergence in a country, which is engaged, every year, either in foreign wars or intestine commotions. Æthiopia produces very near the same kinds of provision as Portugal, though, by the extreme laziness of the inhabitants, in a much less quantity. What the ancients imagined of the torrid zone being a part of the world uninhabitable, is so far from being true, that the climate is very temperate. The blacks have better features than in other countries, and are not without wit and ingenuity. Their apprehension is quick, and their judgment sound. There are, in this climate, two harvests in the year; one in winter, which lasts through the months of July, August, and September; the other in the spring. They have, in the greatest plenty, raisins, peaches, pomegranates, sugar-canes, and some figs. Most of these are ripe about Lent, which the Abyssins keep with great strictness. The animals of the country are the lion, the elephant, the rhinoceros, the unicorn, horses, mules, oxen, and cows without number. They have a very particular custom, which obliges every man, that has a thousand cows, to save every year one day's milk of all his herd, and make a bath with it for his relations. This they do so many days in each year, as they have thousands of cattle; so that, to express how rich a man is, they tell you, 'he bathes so many times.'

"Of the river Nile, which has furnished so much controversy, we have a full and clear description. It is called, by the natives, Abavi, the Father of Water. It rises in Sacala, a province of the kingdom of Goiama, the most fertile and agreeable part of the Abyssinian dominions. On the eastern side of the country, on the declivity of a mountain, whose descent is so easy, that it seems a beautiful plain, is that source of the Nile, which has been sought after, at so much expense and labour. This spring, or rather these two springs, are two holes, each about two feet diameter, a stone's cast distant from each other. One of them is about five feet and a half in depth. Lobo was not able to sink his plummet lower, perhaps, because it was stopped by roots, the whole place being full of trees. A line of ten feet did not reach the bottom of the other. These springs are supposed, by the Abyssins, to be the vents of a great subterraneous lake. At a small distance to the south, is a village called Guix, through which you ascend to the top of the mountain, where there is a little hill, which the idolatrous Agaci hold in great veneration. Their priest calls them together to this place once a year; and every one sacrifices a cow, or more, according to the different degrees of wealth and devotion. Hence we have sufficient proof, that these nations always paid adoration to the deity of this famous river.

"As to the course of the Nile, its waters, after their first rise, run towards the east, about the length of a musket-shot; then, turning northward, continue hidden in the grass and weeds for about a quarter of a league, when they reappear amongst a quantity of rocks. The Nile, from its source, proceeds with so inconsiderable a current that it is in danger of being dried up by the hot season; but soon receiving an increase from the Gemma, the Keltu, the Bransa, and the other smaller rivers, it expands to such a breadth in the plains of Boad, which is not above three days' journey from its source, that a musket-ball will scarcely fly from one bank to the other. Here it begins to run northward, winding, however, a little to the east, for the space of nine or ten leagues, and then enters the so-much-talked-of lake of Dambia, flowing with such violent rapidity, that its waters may be distinguished through the whole passage, which is no less than six leagues. Here begins the greatness of the Nile. Fifteen miles farther, in the land of Alata, it rushes precipitately from the top of a high rock, and forms one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the world. Lobo says, he passed under it without being wet, and resting himself, for the sake of the coolness, was charmed with a thousand delightful rainbows, which the sunbeams painted on the

water, in all their shining and lively colours.[1] The fall of this mighty stream, from so great a height, makes a noise that may be heard at a considerable distance: but it was not found, that the neighbouring inhabitants were deaf. After the cataract, the Nile collects its scattered stream among the rocks, which are so near each other, that, in Lobo's time, a bridge of beams, on which the whole imperial army passed, was laid over them. Sultan Sequed has since built a stone bridge of one arch, in the same place, for which purpose he procured masons from India. Here the river alters its course, and passes through various kingdoms, such as Amhara, Olaca, Choaa, Damot, and the kingdom of Goiama, and, after various windings, returns within a short day's journey of its spring. To pursue it through all its mazes, and accompany it round the kingdom of Goiama, is a journey of twenty-nine days. From Abyssinia, the river passes into the countries of Fazulo and Ombarca, two vast regions little known, inhabited by nations entirely different from the Abyssins. Their hair, like that of the other blacks in those regions, is short and curled. In the year 1615, Rassela Christos, lieutenant-general to sultan Sequed, entered those kingdoms in a hostile manner; but, not being able to get intelligence, returned without attempting any thing. As the empire of Abyssinia terminates at these descents, Lobo followed the course of the Nile no further, leaving it to range over barbarous kingdoms, and convey wealth and plenty into Ægypt, which owes to the annual inundations of this river its envied fertility.[2] Lobo knows nothing of the Nile in the rest of its passage, except that it receives great increase from many other rivers, has several cataracts like that already described, and that few fish are to be found in it: that scarcity is to be attributed to the river-horse, and the crocodile, which destroy the weaker inhabitants of the river. Something, likewise, must be imputed to the cataracts, where fish cannot fall without being killed. Lobo adds, that neither he, nor any with whom he conversed

[1] This, Mr. Bruce, the late traveller, avers to be a downright falsehood. He says, a deep pool of water reaches to the very foot of the rock; and, allowing that there was a seat or bench (which there is not) in the middle of the pool, it is absolutely impossible, by any exertion of human strength, to have arrived at it. But it may be asked, can Mr. Bruce say what was the face of the country in the year 1622, when Lobo saw the magnificent sight which he has described? Mr. Bruce's pool of water may have been formed since; and Lobo, perhaps, was content to sit down without a bench.

[2] After comparing this description with that lately given by Mr. Bruce, the reader will judge, whether Lobo is to lose the honour of having been at the head of the Nile, near two centuries before any other European traveller.



about the crocodile, ever saw him weep; and, therefore, all that hath been said about his tears, must be ranked among the fables, invented for the amusement of children.

"As to the causes of the inundations of the Nile, Lobo observes, that many an idle hypothesis has been framed. Some theorists ascribe it to the high winds, that stop the current, and force the water above its banks. Others pretend a subterraneous communication between the ocean and the Nile, and that the sea, when violently agitated, swells the river. Many are of opinion, that this mighty flood proceeds from the melting of the snow on the mountains of Æthiopia; but so much snow and such prodigious heat are never met with in the same region. Lobo never saw snow in Abyssinia, except on mount Semen, in the kingdom of Tigre, very remote from the Nile; and on Namara, which is, indeed, not far distant, but where there never falls snow enough to wet, when dissolved, the foot of the mountain. To the immense labours of the Portuguese mankind is indebted for the knowledge of the real cause of these inundations, so great and so regular. By them we are informed, that Abyssinia, where the Nile rises, is full of mountains, and, in its natural situation, is much higher than Ægypt; that in the winter, from June to September, no day is without rain; that the Nile receives, in its course, all the rivers, brooks, and torrents, that fall from those mountains, and, by necessary consequence, swelling above its banks, fills the plains of Ægypt with inundations, which come regularly about the month of July, or three weeks after the beginning of the rainy season in Æthiopia. The different degrees of this flood are such certain indications of the fruitfulness or sterility of the ensuing year, that it is publickly proclaimed at Cairo how much the water hath gained during the night."

Such is the account of the Nile and its inundations, which, it is hoped, will not be deemed an improper or tedious digression, especially as the whole is an extract from Johnson's translation. He is, all the time, the actor in the scene, and, in his own words, relates the story. Having finished this work, he returned in February, 1734, to his native city; and, in the month of August following, published proposals for printing by subscription, the Latin poems of Politian, with the history of Latin poetry, from the æra of Petrarch to the time of Politian; and also the life of Politian, to be added by the editor, Samuel Johnson. The book to be printed in thirty octavo sheets, price five shillings. It is to be regretted that this project failed for want of encouragement. Johnson, it seems, differed from

Boileau, Voltaire, and D'Alembert, who have taken upon them to proscribe all modern efforts to write with elegance in a dead language. For a decision pronounced in so high a tone, no good reason can be assigned. The interests of learning require, that the diction of Greece and Rome should be cultivated with care; and he who can write a language with correctness, will be most likely to understand its idiom, its grammar, and its peculiar graces of style. What man of taste would willingly forego the pleasure of reading Vida, Fracastorius, Sannazaro, Strada, and others, down to the late elegant productions of Bishop Lowth? The history which Johnson proposed to himself would, beyond all question, have been a valuable addition to the history of letters; but his project failed. His next expedient was to offer his assistance to Cave, the original projector of the Gentleman's Magazine. For this purpose he sent his proposals in a letter, offering, on reasonable terms, occasionally to fill some pages with poems and inscriptions, never printed before; with fugitive pieces that deserved to be revived, and critical remarks on authors, ancient and modern. Cave agreed to retain him as a correspondent and contributor to the magazine. What the conditions were cannot now be known; but, certainly, they were not sufficient to hinder Johnson from casting his eyes about him in quest of other employment. Accordingly, in 1735, he made overtures to the reverend Mr. Budworth, master of a grammar school at Brerewood, in Staffordshire, to become his assistant. This proposition did not succeed. Mr. Budworth apprehended, that the involuntary motions, to which Johnson's nerves were subject, might make him an object of ridicule with his scholars, and, by consequence, lessen their respect for their master. Another mode of advancing himself presented itself about this time. Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer in Birmingham, admired his talents. It is said, that she had about eight hundred pounds; and that sum, to a person in Johnson's circumstances, was an affluent fortune. A marriage took place; and, to turn his wife's money to the best advantage, he projected the scheme of an academy for education. Gilbert Walmsley, at that time, registrar of the ecclesiastical court of the bishop of Lichfield, was distinguished by his erudition, and the politeness of his manners. He was the friend of Johnson, and, by his weight and influence, endeavoured to promote his interest. The celebrated Garrick, whose father, captain Garrick, lived at Lichfield, was placed in the new seminary of education by that gentleman's advice. Garrick was then about eighteen years old. An accession of seven or eight pupils was the most that could be obtained, though

notice was given by a public advertisement,[1] that at Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by Samuel Johnson.

The undertaking proved abortive. Johnson, having now abandoned all hopes of promoting his fortune in the country, determined to become an adventurer in the world at large. His young pupil, Garrick, had formed the same resolution; and, accordingly, in March, 1737, they arrived in London together. Two such candidates for fame, perhaps never, before that day, entered the metropolis together. Their stock of money was soon exhausted. In his visionary project of an academy, Johnson had probably wasted his wife's substance; and Garrick's father had little more than his half-pay.—The two fellow-travellers had the world before them, and each was to choose his road to fortune and to fame. They brought with them genius, and powers of mind, peculiarly formed by nature for the different vocations to which each of them felt himself inclined. They acted from the impulse of young minds, even then meditating great things, and with courage anticipating success. Their friend, Mr. Walmsley, by a letter to the reverend Mr. Colson, who, it seems, was a great mathematician, exerted his good offices in their favour. He gave notice of their intended journey: "Davy Garrick," he said, "will be with you next week; and Johnson, to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation, either from the Latin or French. Johnson is a very good scholar and a poet, and, I have great hopes, will turn out a fine tragedy-writer. If it should be in your way, I doubt not but you will be ready to recommend and assist your countrymen." Of Mr. Walmsley's merit, and the excellence of his character, Johnson has left a beautiful testimonial at the end of the life of Edmund Smith. It is reasonable to conclude, that a mathematician, absorbed in abstract speculations, was not able to find a sphere of action for two men, who were to be the architects of their own fortune. In three or four years afterwards, Garrick came forth with talents that astonished the public. He began his career at Goodman's fields, and there, "monstratus fatis Vespasianus!" he chose a lucrative profession, and, consequently, soon emerged from all his difficulties. Johnson was left to toil in the humble walks of literature. A tragedy, as appears by Walmsley's letter, was the whole of his stock. This, most probably, was Irene; but, if then finished, it was doomed to wait for a more happy period. It was offered to Fleetwood, and rejected. Johnson looked around him for employment. Having,

[1] See the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736, p. 418.

while he remained in the country, corresponded with Cave, under a feigned name, he now thought it time to make himself known to a man, whom he considered as a patron of literature. Cave had announced, by public advertisement, a prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on life, death, judgment, heaven, and hell; and this circumstance diffused an idea of his liberality. Johnson became connected with him in business, and in a close and intimate acquaintance. Of Cave's character it is unnecessary to say any thing in this place, as Johnson was afterwards the biographer of his first and most useful patron. To be engaged in the translation of some important book was still the object which Johnson had in view. For this purpose, he proposed to give the history of the council of Trent, with copious notes, then lately added to a French edition. Twelve sheets of this work were printed, for which Johnson received forty-nine pounds, as appears by his receipt, in the possession of Mr. Nichols, the compiler of that entertaining and useful work, the Gentleman's Magazine. Johnson's translation was never completed: a like design was offered to the public, under the patronage of Dr. Zachary Pearce; and, by that contention, both attempts were frustrated. Johnson had been commended by Pope, for the translation of the Messiah into Latin verse; but he knew no approach to so eminent a man. With one, however, who was connected with Pope, he became acquainted at St. John's gate; and that person was no other than the well-known Richard Savage, whose life was afterwards written by Johnson with great elegance, and a depth of moral reflection. Savage was a man of considerable talents. His address, his various accomplishments, and, above all, the peculiarity of his misfortunes, recommended him to Johnson's notice. They became united in the closest intimacy. Both had great parts, and they were equally under the pressure of want. Sympathy joined them in a league of friendship. Johnson has been often heard to relate, that he and Savage walked round Grosvenor square till four in the morning; in the course of their conversation reforming the world, dethroning princes, establishing new forms of government, and giving laws to the several states of Europe, till, fatigued at length with their legislative office, they began to feel the want of refreshment, but could not muster up more than fourpence-halfpenny. Savage, it is true, had many vices; but vice could never strike its roots in a mind like Johnson's, seasoned early with religion, and the principles of moral rectitude. His first prayer was composed in the year 1738. He had not, at that time, renounced the use of wine; and, no doubt, occasionally enjoyed his friend and his



bottle. The love of late hours, which followed him through life, was, perhaps, originally contracted in company with Savage. However that may be, their connexion was not of long duration. In the year 1738, Savage was reduced to the last distress. Mr. Pope, in a letter to him, expressed his concern for "the miserable withdrawing of his pension after the death of the queen;" and gave him hopes that, "in a short time, he should find himself supplied with a competence, without any dependance on those little creatures, whom we are pleased to call the great." The scheme proposed to him was, that he should retire to Swansea in Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by subscription: Pope was to pay twenty pounds. This plan, though finally established, took more than a year before it was carried into execution. In the mean time, the intended retreat of Savage called to Johnson's mind the third satire of Juvenal, in which that poet takes leave of a friend, who was withdrawing himself from all the vices of Rome. Struck with this idea, he wrote that well-known poem, called London. The first lines manifestly point to Savage.

"Though grief and fondness in my breast rebel,
When injur'd Thales bids the town farewell;
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend;
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend:
Resolv'd, at length, from vice and London far,
To breathe, in distant fields, a purer air;
And, fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,
Give to St. David one true Briton more."

Johnson, at that time, lodged at Greenwich. He there fixes the scene, and takes leave of his friend; who, he says in his life, parted from him with tears in his eyes. The poem, when finished, was offered to Cave. It happened, however, that the late Mr. Dodsley was the purchaser, at the price of ten guineas. It was published in 1738; and Pope, we are told, said, "The author, whoever he is, will not be long concealed;" alluding to the passage in Terence, "Ubi, ubi est, diu celari non potest." Notwithstanding that prediction, it does not appear that, besides the copy-money, any advantage accrued to the author of a poem, written with the elegance and energy of Pope. Johnson, in August, 1738, went, with all the fame of his poetry, to offer himself a candidate for the mastership of the school at Appleby, in Leicestershire. The statutes of the place required, that the person chosen should be a master of arts. To remove this objection, the then lord Gower was induced to write to a friend, in order to obtain

for Johnson a master's degree in the university of Dublin, by the recommendation of Dr. Swift. The letter was printed in one of the magazines, and is as follows:

"SIR,

"Mr. Samuel Johnson, author of London, a satire, and some other poetical pieces, is a native of this county, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity-school, now vacant; the certain salary of which is sixty pounds per year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but, unfortunately, he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which would make him happy for life, by not being a master of arts, which, by the statutes of the school, the master of it must be.

"Now these gentlemen do me the honour to think, that I have interest enough in you, to prevail upon you to write to dean Swift, to persuade the university of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man master of arts in their university. They highly extol the man's learning and probity; and will not be persuaded, that the university will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the dean. They say, he is not afraid of the strictest examination, though he is of so long a journey; and yet he will venture it, if the dean thinks it necessary, choosing rather to die upon the road, than to be starved to death in translating for booksellers, which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

"I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than these good-natured gentlemen apprehend, especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the 11th of next month. If you see this matter in the same light that it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity and propensity to relieve merit, in distress, will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding any more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you, that I am, with great truth, sir,

"Your faithful humble servant,

"GOWER."

"Trentham, Aug. 1st."

This scheme miscarried. There is reason to think, that Swift declined to meddle in the business; and, to that circumstance, Johnson's known dislike of Swift has been often imputed.



It is mortifying to pursue a man of merit through all his difficulties; and yet this narrative must be, through many following years, the history of genius and virtue struggling with adversity. Having left the school at Appleby, Johnson was thrown back on the metropolis. Bred to no profession, without relations, friends, or interest, he was condemned to drudgery in the service of Cave, his only patron. In November, 1738, was published a translation of Crousaz's Examen of Pope's Essay on Man; containing a succinct view of the system of the fatalists, and a confutation of their opinions; with an illustration of the doctrine of free will; and an enquiry, what view Mr. Pope might have in touching upon the Leibnitzian philosophy, and fatalism: by Mr. Crousaz, professor of philosophy and mathematics at Lausanne. This translation has been generally thought a production of Johnson's pen; but it is now known, that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter has acknowledged it to be one of her early performances. It is certain, however, that Johnson was eager to promote the publication. He considered the foreign philosopher as a man zealous in the cause of religion; and with him he was willing to join against the system of the fatalists, and the doctrine of Leibnitz. It is well known, that Warburton wrote a vindication of Mr. Pope; but there is reason to think, that Johnson conceived an early prejudice against the Essay on Man; and what once took root in a mind like his, was not easily eradicated. His letter to Cave on this subject is still extant, and may well justify sir John Hawkins, who inferred that Johnson was the translator of Crousaz. The conclusion of the letter is remarkable: "I am yours, Impransus." If by that Latin word was meant, that he had not dined, because he wanted the means, who can read it, even at this hour, without an aching heart?

With a mind naturally vigorous, and quickened by necessity, Johnson formed a multiplicity of projects; but most of them proved abortive. A number of small tracts issued from his pen with wonderful rapidity; such as Marmor Norfolciense; or an essay on an ancient prophetical inscription, in monkish rhyme, discovered at Lynn in Norfolk. By Probus Britannicus. This was a pamphlet against sir Robert Walpole. According to sir John Hawkins, a warrant was issued to apprehend the author, who retired, with his wife, to an obscure lodging near Lambeth marsh, and there eluded the search of the messengers. But this story has no foundation in truth. Johnson was never known to mention such an incident in his life; and Mr. Steele, late of the treasury, caused diligent search to be made at the proper offices, and no trace of such a proceeding could

be found. In the same year (1739) the lord chamberlain prohibited the representation of a tragedy, called Gustavus Vasa, by Henry Brooke. Under the mask of irony, Johnson published, A Vindication of the Licenser from the malicious and scandalous Aspersions of Mr. Brooke. Of these two pieces, sir John Hawkins says, "they have neither learning nor wit; nor a single ray of that genius, which has since blazed forth;" but, as they have been lately reprinted, the reader, who wishes to gratify his curiosity, is referred to the fourteenth volume of Johnson's works, published by Stockdale. The lives of Boerhaave, Blake, Barratier, father Paul, and others, were, about that time, printed in the Gentleman's Magazine. The subscription of fifty pounds a year for Savage was completed; and, in July, 1739, Johnson parted with the companion of his midnight hours, never to see him more. The separation was, perhaps, an advantage to him, who wanted to make a right use of his time, and even then beheld, with self-reproach, the waste occasioned by dissipation. His abstinence from wine and strong liquors began soon after the departure of Savage. What habits he contracted in the course of that acquaintance cannot now be known. The ambition of excelling in conversation, and that pride of victory, which, at times, disgraced a man of Johnson's genius, were, perhaps, native blemishes. A fierce spirit of independence, even in the midst of poverty, may be seen in Savage; and, if not thence transfused by Johnson into his own manners, it may, at least, be supposed to have gained strength from the example before him. During that connexion, there was, if we believe sir John Hawkins, a short separation between our author and his wife; but a reconciliation soon took place. Johnson loved her, and showed his affection in various modes of gallantry, which Garrick used to render ridiculous by his mimicry. The affectation of soft and fashionable airs did not become an unwieldy figure: his admiration was received by the wife with the flutter of an antiquated coquette; and both, it is well known, furnished matter for the lively genius of Garrick.

It is a mortifying reflection, that Johnson, with a store of learning and extraordinary talents, was not able, at the age of thirty, to force his way to the favour of the public:

"Slow rises worth by poverty depress'd."

"He was still," as he says himself, "to provide for the day that was passing over him." He saw Cave involved in a state of warfare with the numerous competitors, at that time, struggling with the

Gentleman's Magazine; and gratitude for such supplies as Johnson received, dictated a Latin ode on the subject of that contention. The first lines,

> "Urbane, nullis fesse laboribus,
> Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,"

put one in mind of Casimir's ode to Pope Urban:

> "Urbane, regum maxime, maxime
> Urbane vatum."—

The Polish poet was, probably, at that time, in the hands of a man, who had meditated the history of the Latin poets. Guthrie, the historian, had, from July, 1736, composed the parliamentary speeches for the magazine; but, from the beginning of the session, which opened on the 19th of November, 1740, Johnson succeeded to that department, and continued it from that time to the debate on spirituous liquors, which happened in the house of lords in February, 1742-3. The eloquence, the force of argument, and the splendour of language, displayed in the several speeches, are well known, and universally admired. That Johnson was the author of the debates, during that period, was not generally known; but the secret transpired several years afterwards, and was avowed, by himself, on the following occasion. Mr. Wedderburne, now lord Loughborough,[1] Dr. Johnson, Dr. Francis, the translator of Horace, the present writer, and others, dined with the late Mr. Foote. An important debate, towards the end of sir Robert Walpole's administration, being mentioned, Dr. Francis observed, "that Mr. Pitt's speech, on that occasion, was the best he had ever read." He added, "that he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated orator, with all the decorations of style and language within the reach of his capacity; but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above mentioned." Many of the company remembered the debate, and some passages were cited, with the approbation and applause of all present. During the ardour of conversation, Johnson remained silent. As soon as the warmth of praise subsided, he opened with these words: "That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter street." The company was struck with astonishment. After staring at each other in silent amaze, Dr. Francis asked, "how that speech could be written by him?" "Sir," said Johnson, "I wrote it in Exeter street. I never had been in the gallery of the house of

[1] Afterwards earl of Roslin. He died January 3, 1805.

commons but once. Cave had interest with the door-keepers. He, and the persons employed under him, gained admittance; they brought away the subject of discussion, the names of the speakers, the side they took, and the order in which they rose, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate. The whole was afterwards communicated to me, and I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the parliamentary debates." To this discovery, Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say, that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes, would be saying nothing." The rest of the company bestowed lavish encomiums on Johnson: one, in particular, praised his impartiality; observing, that he dealt out reason and eloquence, with an equal hand to both parties. "That is not quite true," said Johnson; "I saved appearances tolerably well; but I took care that the WHIG DOGS should not have the best of it." The sale of the magazine was greatly increased by the parliamentary debates, which were continued by Johnson till the month of March, 1742-3. From that time the magazine was conducted by Dr. Hawkesworth.

In 1743-4, Osborne, the bookseller, who kept a shop in Gray's inn, purchased the earl of Oxford's library, at the price of thirteen thousand pounds. He projected a catalogue in five octavo volumes, at five shillings each. Johnson was employed in that painful drudgery. He was, likewise, to collect all such small tracts as were, in any degree, worth preserving, in order to reprint and publish the whole in a collection, called The Harleian Miscellany. The catalogue was completed; and the miscellany, in 1749, was published in eight quarto volumes. In this business Johnson was a day-labourer for immediate subsistence, not unlike Gustavus Vasa, working in the mines of Dalecarlia. What Wilcox, a bookseller of eminence in the Strand, said to Johnson, on his first arrival in town, was now almost confirmed. He lent our author five guineas, and then asked him, "How do you mean to earn your livelihood in this town?" "By my literary labours," was the answer. Wilcox, staring at him, shook his head: "By your literary labours! You had better buy a porter's knot." Johnson used to tell this anecdote to Mr. Nichols: but he said, "Wilcox was one of my best friends, and he meant well." In fact, Johnson, while employed in Gray's inn, may be said to have carried a porter's knot. He paused occasionally to peruse the book that came to his hand. Osborne thought that such curiosity tended to nothing but delay, and objected to it with all the pride and insolence of a man who knew that he paid daily wages. In the dispute that of

course ensued, Osborne, with that roughness which
him, enforced his argument by giving the lie. Johns
and knocked the bookseller down. This story has be
instance of Johnson's ferocity; but merit cannot
spurns of the unworthy with a patient spirit.[1]

That the history of an author must be found in
general, a true observation; and was never more app
present narrative. Every æra of Johnson's life is fixe
In 1744, he published the life of Savage; and t
new edition of Shakespeare. As a prelude to this desi
in 1745, Miscellaneous Observations on the Trage
with remarks on sir Thomas Hanmer's edition; to
fixed, Proposals for a new Edition of Shakespeare,
Of this pamphlet, Warburton, in the preface to
given his opinion: "As to all those things, which
lished under the title of essays, remarks, obse
Shakespeare, if you except some critical notes on
a specimen of a projected edition, and written, as a
of parts and genius, the rest are absolutely below
But the attention of the public was not excited; th
to promote a subscription; and the project died to
day. A new undertaking, however, was soon
namely, an English dictionary upon an enlarged
the most opulent booksellers had meditated a work

together; the nobleman, celebrated for his wit, and all the graces of polite behaviour; the author, conscious of his own merit, towering in idea above all competition, versed in scholastic logic, but a stranger to the arts of polite conversation, uncouth, vehement, and vociferous. The coalition was too unnatural. Johnson expected a Mæcenas, and was disappointed. No patronage, no assistance followed. Visits were repeated; but the reception was not cordial. Johnson, one day, was left a full hour, waiting in an antichamber, till a gentleman should retire, and leave his lordship at leisure. This was the famous Colley Cibber. Johnson saw him go, and, fired with indignation, rushed out of the house.[1] What lord Chesterfield thought of his visitor may be seen in a passage in one of that nobleman's letters to his son.[2] "There is a man, whose moral character, deep learning, and superior parts, I acknowledge, admire, and respect; but whom it is so impossible for me to love, that I am almost in a fever, whenever I am in his company. His figure (without being deformed) seems made to disgrace or ridicule the common structure of the human body. His legs and arms are never in the position which, according to the situation of his body, they ought to be in, but constantly employed in committing acts of hostility upon the graces. He throws any where, but down his throat, whatever he means to drink; and mangles what he means to carve. Inattentive to all the regards of social life, he mistimes and misplaces every thing. He disputes with heat indiscriminately, mindless of the rank, character, and situation of those with whom he disputes. Absolutely ignorant of the several gradations of familiarity and respect, he is exactly the same to his superiors, his equals, and his inferiors; and, therefore, by a necessary consequence, is absurd to two of the three. Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him is, to consider him a respectable Hottentot."[3] Such was the idea entertained by lord Chesterfield. After the incident of Colley Cibber, Johnson never repeated his visits. In his high and decisive tone, he has been often heard to say, "lord Chesterfield is a wit among lords, and a lord among wits."[4]

In the course of the year 1747, Garrick, in conjunction with Lacy, became patentee of Drury lane playhouse. For the opening of the theatre, at the usual time, Johnson wrote, for his friend, the well-known prologue, which, to say no more of it, may, at least, be placed

[1] Johnson denied the whole of this story. See Life, vol. i., p. 207.—*Editor.*

[2] Letter 212.

[3] See vol. i., p. 215.—*Editor.*

[4] Boswell gives this saying differently, vol. i., p. 214.—*Editor.*

on a level with Pope's to the tragedy of Cato. The playhouse being now under Garrick's direction, Johnson thought the opportunity fair to think of his tragedy of Irene, which was his whole stock on his first arrival in town, in the year 1737. That play was, accordingly, put into rehearsal in January, 1749. As a precursor to prepare the way, and to awaken the public attention, The Vanity of Human Wishes, a poem in imitation of the tenth satire of Juvenal, by the author of London, was published in the same month. In the Gentleman's Magazine, for February, 1749, we find that the tragedy of Irene was acted at Drury lane, on Monday, February the 6th, and, from that time, without interruption, to Monday, February the 20th, being in all thirteen nights. Since that time, it has not been exhibited on any stage. Irene may be added to some other plays in our language, which have lost their place in the theatre, but continue to please in the closet. During the representation of this piece, Johnson attended every night behind the scenes. Conceiving that his character, as an author, required some ornament for his person, he chose, upon that occasion, to decorate himself with a handsome waistcoat, and a gold-laced hat. The late Mr. Topham Beauclerc, who had a great deal of that humour, which pleases the more for seeming undesigned, used to give a pleasant description of this green-room finery, as related by the author himself; "But," said Johnson, with great gravity, "I soon laid aside my gold-laced hat, lest it should make me proud." The amount of the three benefit nights for the tragedy of Irene, it is to be feared, was not very considerable, as the profit, that stimulating motive, never invited the author to another dramatic attempt. Some years afterwards, when the present writer was intimate with Garrick, and knew Johnson to be in distress, he asked the manager, why he did not produce another tragedy for his Lichfield friend? Garrick's answer was remarkable: "When Johnson writes tragedy, 'declamation roars, and passion sleeps:' when Shakespeare wrote, he dipped his pen in his own heart."

There may, perhaps, be a degree of sameness in this regular way of tracing an author from one work to another, and the reader may feel the effect of a tedious monotony; but, in the life of Johnson, there are no other landmarks. He was now forty years old, and had mixed but little with the world. He followed no profession, transacted no business, and was a stranger to what is called a town life. We are now arrived at the brightest period, he had hitherto known. The sun broke out upon mankind with a degree of lustre that produced a triumph over all his difficulties. The life of Savage was

admired, as a beautiful and instructive piece of biography. The two imitations of Juvenal were thought to rival even the excellence of Pope; and the tragedy of Irene, though uninteresting on the stage, was universally admired in the closet, for the propriety of the sentiments, the richness of the language, and the general harmony of the whole composition. His fame was widely diffused; and he had made his agreement with the booksellers for his English dictionary at the sum of fifteen hundred guineas; a part of which was to be, from time to time, advanced, in proportion to the progress of the work. This was a certain fund for his support, without being obliged to write fugitive pieces for the petty supplies of the day. Accordingly we find that, in 1749, he established a club, consisting of ten in number, at Horseman's, in Ivy lane, on every Tuesday evening. This is the first scene of social life to which Johnson can be traced, out of his own house. The members of this little society were, Samuel Johnson; Dr. Salter, father of the late master of the Charter house; Dr. Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant; Mr. Payne, a bookseller, in Paternoster row; Mr. Samuel Dyer, a learned young man; Dr. William M'Ghie, a Scotch physician; Dr. Edmund Barker, a young physician; Dr. Bathurst, another young physician; and sir John Hawkins. This list is given by sir John, as it should seem, with no other view than to draw a spiteful and malevolent character of almost every one of them. Mr. Dyer, whom sir John says he loved with the affection of a brother, meets with the harshest treatment, because it was his maxim, that "to live in peace with mankind, and in a temper to do good offices, was the most essential part of our duty." That notion of moral goodness gave umbrage to sir John Hawkins, and drew upon the memory of his friend, the bitterest imputations. Mr. Dyer, however, was admired and loved through life. He was a man of literature. Johnson loved to enter with him into a discussion of metaphysical, moral, and critical subjects; in those conflicts, exercising his talents, and, according to his custom, always contending for victory. Dr. Bathurst was the person on whom Johnson fixed his affection. He hardly ever spoke of him without tears in his eyes. It was from him, who was a native of Jamaica, that Johnson received into his service Frank,[1] the black servant, whom, on account of his master, he valued to the end of his life. At the time of instituting the club in Ivy lane, Johnson had projected the Rambler. The title was most probably suggested by the Wanderer; a poem which he mentions, with the warmest praise, in the life of Savage. With the same spirit

[1] See Gent. Mag., vol. lxxi., p. 190.

of independence with which he wished to live, it was now his pride to write. He communicated his plan to none of his friends: he desired no assistance, relying entirely on his own fund, and the protection of the divine being, which he implored in a solemn form of prayer, composed by himself for the occasion. Having formed a resolution to undertake a work that might be of use and honour to his country, he thought, with Milton, that this was not to be obtained "but by devout prayer to that eternal spirit, that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases."

Having invoked the special protection of heaven, and by that act of piety fortified his mind, he began the great work of the Rambler. The first number was published on Tuesday, March the 20th, 1750; and from that time was continued regularly every Tuesday and Saturday, for the space of two years, when it finally closed on Saturday, March 14, 1752. As it began with motives of piety, so it appears that the same religious spirit glowed, with unabated ardour, to the last. His conclusion is: "The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intentions, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of christianity, without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I, therefore, look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth." The whole number of essays amounted to two hundred and eight. Addison's, in the Spectator, are more in number, but not half in point of quantity: Addison was not bound to publish on stated days; he could watch the ebb and flow of his genius, and send his paper to the press, when his own taste was satisfied. Johnson's case was very different. He wrote singly and alone. In the whole progress of the work he did not receive more than ten essays. This was a scanty contribution. For the rest, the author has described his situation: "He that condemns himself to compose on a stated day, will often bring to his task an attention dissipated, a memory embarrassed, an imagination overwhelmed, a mind distracted with anxieties, a body languishing with disease: he will labour on a barren topick, till it is too late to change it; or, in the ardour of invention, diffuse his thoughts into wild exuberance, which the pressing hour of publication cannot suffer judgment to examine or reduce." Of this excellent production, the number sold on each day did not amount to five hun-

dred: of course, the bookseller, who paid the author four guineas a week, did not carry on a successful trade. His generosity and perseverance deserve to be commended; and happily, when the collection appeared in volumes, were amply rewarded. Johnson lived to see his labours flourish in a tenth edition. His posterity, as an ingenious French writer has said, on a similar occasion, began in his life-time.

In the beginning of 1750, soon after the Rambler was set on foot, Johnson was induced, the arts of a vile impostor, to lend his assistance, during a temporary delusion, to a fraud not to be paralleled in the annals of literature.[1] One Lauder, a native of Scotland, who had been a teacher in the university of Edinburgh, had conceived a mortal antipathy to the name and character of Milton. His reason was, because the prayer of Pamela, in sir Philip Sydney's Arcadia, was, as he supposed, maliciously inserted by the great poet in an edition of the Eikôn Basilike, in order to fix an imputation of impiety on the memory of the murdered king. Fired with resentment, and willing to reap the profits of a gross imposition, this man collected, from several Latin poets, such as Masenius the jesuit, Staphorstius, a Dutch divine, Beza, and others, all such passages as bore any kind of resemblance to different places in the Paradise Lost; and these he published, from time to time, in the Gentleman's Magazine, with occasional interpolations of lines, which he himself translated from Milton. The public credulity swallowed all with eagerness; and Milton was supposed to be guilty of plagiarism from inferior modern writers. The fraud succeeded so well, that Lauder collected the whole into a volume, and advertised it under the title of An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns, in his Paradise Lost; dedicated to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. While the book was in the press, the proof-sheets were shown to Johnson, at the Ivy lane club, by Payne, the bookseller, who was one of the members. No man in that society was in possession of the authors from whom Lauder professed to make his extracts. The charge was believed, and the contriver of it found his way to Johnson, who is represented, by sir John Hawkins, not indeed as an accomplice in the fraud, but, through motives of malignity to Milton, delighting in the detection, and exulting that the poet's reputation would suffer by the discovery. More malice to a deceased friend cannot well be imagined. Hawkins adds, "that he wished well to the argument must be inferred from the

[1] It has since been paralleled, in the case of the Shakespeare MSS. by a yet more vile impostor.

preface, which, indubitably, was written by him." The preface, it is well known, was written by Johnson. But if Johnson approved of the argument, it was no longer than while he believed it founded in truth. Let us advert to his own words in that very preface. "Among the inquiries to which the ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospection of the progress of this mighty genius in the construction of his work; a view of the fabrick gradually rising, perhaps from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure, through all its varieties, to the simplicity of the first plan; to find what was projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own." These were the motives that induced Johnson to assist Lauder with a preface; and are not these the motives of a critic and a scholar? What reader of taste, what man of real knowledge, would not think his time well employed in an enquiry so curious, so interesting, and instructive? If Lauder's facts were really true, who would not be glad, without the smallest tincture of malevolence, to receive real information? It is painful to be thus obliged to vindicate a man who, in his heart, towered above the petty arts of fraud and imposition, against an injudicious biographer, who undertook to be his editor, and the protector of his memory. Another writer, Dr. Towers, in an Essay on the Life and Character of Dr. Johnson, seems to countenance this calumny. He says: "It can hardly be doubted, but that Johnson's aversion to Milton's politics was the cause of that alacrity, with which he joined with Lauder in his infamous attack on our great epic poet, and which induced him to assist in that transaction." These words would seem to describe an accomplice, were they not immediately followed by an express declaration, that Johnson was "unacquainted with the imposture." Dr. Towers adds, "It seems to have been, by way of making some compensation to the memory of Milton, for the share he had in the attack of Lauder, that Johnson wrote the prologue, spoken by Garrick, at Drury lane theatre, 1750, on the performance of the Masque of Comus, for the benefit of Milton's granddaughter." Dr. Towers is not free from prejudice; but, as Shakespeare has it, "he begets a temperance, to give it smoothness." He is, therefore, entitled to a dispassionate answer. When Johnson wrote the prologue, it does appear that he was aware of the malignant artifices

practised by Lauder. In the postscript to Johnson's preface, a subscription is proposed, for relieving the granddaughter of the author of Paradise Lost. Dr. Towers will agree, that this shows Johnson's alacrity in doing good. That alacrity showed itself again, in the letter printed in the European Magazine, January, 1785, and there said to have appeared originally in the General Advertiser, 4th April, 1750, by which the public were invited to embrace the opportunity of paying a just regard to the illustrious dead, united with the pleasure of doing good to the living. The letter adds, "To assist industrious indigence, struggling with distress, and debilitated by age, is a display of virtue, and an acquisition of happiness and honour. Whoever, therefore, would be thought capable of pleasure, in reading the works of our incomparable Milton, and not so destitute of gratitude, as to refuse to lay out a trifle, in a rational and elegant entertainment, for the benefit of his living remains, for the exercise of their own virtue, the increase of their reputation, and the consciousness of doing good, should appear at Drury lane theatre, to-morrow, April 5, when Comus will be performed, for the benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, granddaughter to the author, and the only surviving branch of his family. *Nota bene*, there will be a new prologue on the occasion, written by the author of Irene, and spoken by Mr. Garrick." The man, who had thus exerted himself to serve the granddaughter, cannot be supposed to have entertained personal malice to the grandfather. It is true, that the malevolence of Lauder, as well as the impostures of Archibald Bower, were fully detected by the labours, in the cause of truth, of the reverend Dr. Douglas, the late lord bishop of Salisbury,

——"Diram qui contudit Hydram,
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit."

But the pamphlet, entitled, Milton vindicated from the Charge of Plagiarism brought against him by Mr. Lauder, and Lauder himself convicted of several forgeries, and gross impositions on the public, by John Douglas, M.A. rector of Eaton Constantine, Salop, was not published till the year 1751. In that work, p. 77, Dr. Douglas says, "It is to be hoped, nay, it is expected, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments, and inimitable style, point out the author of Lauder's preface and postscript, will no longer allow a man to plume himself with his feathers, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance; an assistance which, I am persuaded, would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts, which I have been the instrument of conveying to the

world." We have here a contemporary testimony to the integrity of Dr. Johnson, throughout the whole of that vile transaction. What was the consequence of the requisition made by Dr. Douglas? Johnson, whose ruling passion may be said to be the love of truth, convinced Lauder, that it would be more for his interest to make a full confession of his guilt, than to stand forth the convicted champion of a lie; and, for this purpose, he drew up, in the strongest terms, a recantation, in a letter to the reverend Mr. Douglas, which Lauder signed, and published in the year 1751. That piece will remain a lasting memorial of the abhorrence, with which Johnson beheld a violation of truth. Mr. Nichols, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, showed him, in 1780, a book, called Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton; in which the affair of Lauder was renewed with virulence; and a poetical scale in the Literary Magazine, 1758, (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection,) was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin: "In the business of Lauder I was deceived, partly by thinking the man too frantick to be fraudulent. Of the poetical scale, quoted from the magazine, I am not the author. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it." As a critic and a scholar, Johnson was willing to receive what numbers, at the time, believed to be true information: when he found that the whole was a forgery, he renounced all connexion with the author.

In March, 1752, he felt a severe stroke of affliction in the death of his wife. The last number of the Rambler, as already mentioned, was on the 14th of that month. The loss of Mrs. Johnson was then approaching, and, probably, was the cause that put an end to those admirable periodical essays. It appears that she died on the 28th of March, in a memorandum, at the foot of the Prayers and Meditations, that is called her Dying Day. She was buried at Bromley, under the care of Dr. Hawkesworth. Johnson placed a Latin inscription on her tomb, in which he celebrated her beauty. With the singularity of his prayers for his deceased wife, from that time to the end of his days, the world is sufficiently acquainted. On Easter day, 22nd April, 1764, his memorandum says: "Thought on Tetty, poor dear Tetty! with my eyes full. Went to church. After sermon I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me." In a prayer, January 23, 1759, the

day on which his mother was buried, he commends, as far as may be lawful, her soul to God, imploring for her whatever is most beneficial to her in her present state. In this habit he persevered to the end of his days. The reverend Mr. Strahan, the editor of the Prayers and Meditations, observes, "that Johnson, on some occasions, prays that the Almighty *may have had mercy* on his wife and Mr. Thrale; evidently supposing their sentence to have been already passed in the divine mind; and, by consequence, proving, that he had no belief in a state of purgatory, and no reason for praying for the dead that could impeach the sincerity of his profession as a protestant." Mr. Strahan adds, "that, in praying for the regretted tenants of the grave, Johnson conformed to a practice which has been retained by many learned members of the established church, though the liturgy no longer admits it, if *where the tree falleth, there it shall be;* if our state, at the close of life, is to be the measure of our final sentence, then prayers for the dead, being visibly fruitless, can be regarded only as the vain oblations of superstition. But of all superstitions this, perhaps, is one of the least unamiable, and most incident to a good mind. If our sensations of kindness be intense, those, whom we have revered and loved, death cannot wholly seclude from our concern. It is true, for the reason just mentioned, such evidences of our surviving affection may be thought ill judged; but surely they are generous, and some natural tenderness is due even to a superstition, which thus originates in piety and benevolence." These sentences, extracted from the reverend Mr. Strahan's preface, if they are not a full justification, are, at least, a beautiful apology. It will not be improper to add what Johnson himself has said on the subject. Being asked by Mr. Boswell,[1] what he thought of purgatory, as believed by the Roman catholicks? his answer was, "It is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion, that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked, as to deserve everlasting punishment; nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits; and, therefore, that God is graciously pleased to allow a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see there is nothing unreasonable in this; and if it be once established, that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind, who are yet in this life." This was Dr. Johnson's guess into futurity; and to guess is the utmost that man can do:

"Shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it."

[1] See Life, vol. i., p. 498.—*Editor.*

Mrs. Johnson left a daughter, Lucy Porter, by her
She had contracted a friendship with Mrs. Anne
daughter of Zachary Williams, a gentleman of emin
Wales, who had devoted more than thirty years of a
study of the longitude, and was thought to have made
towards that important discovery. His letters to Lo
the lords of the admiralty, partly corrected and pa
Dr. Johnson, are still extant in the hands of Mr. Nich
find Dr. Williams, in the eighty-third year of his age,
had prepared an instrument, which might be called
miniature of the terraqueous globe, showing, with th
tables, constructed by himself, the variations of the m
and ascertaining the longitude, for the safety of
appears that this scheme had been referred to sir Isaa
that great philosopher excusing himself on account o
age, all applications were useless, till 1751, when the
ferred, by order of lord Anson, to Dr. Bradley, the
fessor of astronomy. His report was unfavourable,[2] t
that a considerable progress had been made. Dr. Wi
his labour and expense, died in a short time after, a
stance of unrewarded merit. His daughter possess
talents, and, though blind, had an alacrity of mind tha
versation agreeable, and even desirable. To relie

guage, that his old friend did not live to see the triumph of his labours. In May, 1755, that great work was published. Johnson was desirous that it should come from one who had obtained academical honours; and for that purpose his friend, the rev. Thos. Warton, obtained for him, in the preceding month of February, a diploma for a master's degree, from the university of Oxford.—Garrick, on the publication of the Dictionary, wrote the following lines:

"Talk of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier can beat ten of France.
Would we alter the boast, from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men.
In the deep mines of science, though Frenchmen may toil,
Can their strength be compar'd to Locke, Newton, or Boyle?
Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their powers,
Their versemen and prosemen, then match them with ours.
First Shakespeare and Milton, like gods in the fight,
Have put their whole drama and epic to flight.
In satires, epistles, and odes would they cope?
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope.
And Johnson, well arm'd, like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French, and will beat forty more."

It is, perhaps, needless to mention, that forty was the number of the French academy, at the time when their dictionary was published to settle their language.

In the course of the winter, preceding this grand publication, the late earl of Chesterfield gave two essays in the periodical paper, called The World, dated November 28, and December 5, 1754, to prepare the public for so important a work. The original plan, addressed to his lordship in the year 1747, is there mentioned, in terms of the highest praise; and this was understood, at the time, to be a courtly way of soliciting a dedication of the Dictionary to himself. Johnson treated this civility with disdain. He said to Garrick and others: "I have sailed a long and painful voyage round the world of the English language; and does he now send out two cockboats to tow me into harbour?" He had said, in the last number of the Rambler, "that, having laboured to maintain the dignity of virtue, I will not now degrade it by the meanness of dedication." Such a man, when he had finished his Dictionary, "not," as he says himself, "in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academick bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow, and without the patronage of the great," was not likely to be caught by the lure, thrown out by lord Chesterfield. He had, in

vain, sought the patronage of that nobleman; and his pride, exasperated by disappointment, drew from him the following letter, dated in the month of February, 1755.

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

"My Lord,

"I have been lately informed, by the proprietors of The World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish, that I might boast myself 'le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;' that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending. But I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing, which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

"Seven years, my lord, have now passed, since I waited in your outward room, or was repulsed from your door; during which time, I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect; for I never had a patron before.

"The shepherd in Virgil grew acquainted with love, and found him a native of the rocks.

"Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed, till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations, where no

benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a patron, which providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work, thus far, with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed, though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself, with so much exultation,

"My lord,

"your lordship's most humble

"and most obedient servant,

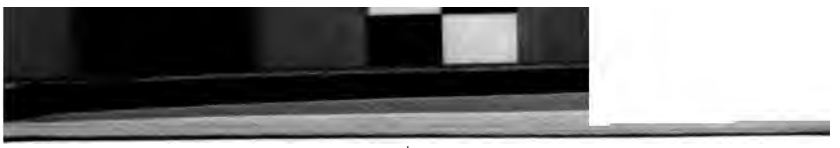
"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

It is said, upon good authority, that Johnson once received from lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds. It were to be wished that the secret had never transpired. It was mean to receive it, and meaner to give it. It may be imagined, that for Johnson's ferocity, as it has been called, there was some foundation in his finances; and, as his Dictionary was brought to a conclusion, that money was now to flow in upon him. The reverse was the case. For his subsistence, during the progress of the work, he had received, at different times, the amount of his contract; and, when his receipts were produced to him at a tavern dinner, given by the booksellers, it appeared, that he had been paid a hundred pounds and upwards more than his due. The author of a book, called Lexiphanes,[1] written by a Mr. Campbell, a Scotchman, and purser of a man of war, endeavoured to blast his laurels, but in vain. The world applauded, and Johnson never replied. "Abuse," he said, "is often of service: there is nothing so dangerous to an author as silence; his name, like a shittlecock, must be beat backward and forward, or it falls to the ground." Lexiphanes professed to be an imitation of the pleasant manner of Lucian; but humour was not the talent of the writer of Lexiphanes. As Dryden says, "he had too much horse-play in his raillery."

It was in the summer, 1754, that the present writer became acquainted with Dr. Johnson. The cause of his first visit is related by Mrs. Piozzi, nearly in the following manner:—Mr. Murphy being engaged in a periodical paper, the Gray's inn Journal, was at a friend's house in the country, and, not being disposed to lose pleasure

[1] This work was not published until the year 1767, when Dr. Johnson's Dictionary was fully established in reputation.

for business, wished to content his bookseller by some unstudied essay. He, therefore, took up a French Journal Littéraire, and, translating something he liked, sent it away to town. Time, however, discovered that he translated from the French, a Rambler, which had been taken from the English, without acknowledgment. Upon this discovery, Mr. Murphy thought it right to make his excuses to Dr. Johnson. He went next day, and found him covered with soot, like a chimney-sweeper, in a little room, as if he had been acting Lungs, in the Alchemist, "making ether." This being told by Mr. Murphy, in company, "Come, come," said Dr. Johnson, "the story is black enough; but it was a happy day that brought you first to my house." After this first visit, the author of this narrative, by degrees, grew intimate with Dr. Johnson. The first striking sentence, that he heard from him, was in a few days after the publication of lord Bolingbroke's posthumous works. Mr. Garrick asked him, "If he had seen them." "Yes, I have seen them." "What do you think of them?" "Think of them!" He made a long pause, and then replied: "Think of them! A scoundrel, and a coward! A scoundrel, who spent his life in charging a gun against christianity; and a coward, who was afraid of hearing the report of his own gun; but left half a crown to a hungry Scotchman to draw the trigger, after his death." His mind, at this time strained, and over-laboured by constant exertion, called for an interval of repose and indolence. But indolence was the time of danger: it was then that his spirits, not employed abroad, turned with inward hostility against himself. His reflections on his own life and conduct were always severe; and, wishing to be immaculate, he destroyed his own peace by unnecessary scruples. He tells us, that when he surveyed his past life, he discovered nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body, and disturbances of mind, very near to madness. His life, he says, from his earliest years, was wasted in a morning bed; and his reigning sin was a general sluggishness, to which he was always inclined, and, in part of his life, almost compelled, by morbid melancholy, and weariness of mind. This was his constitutional malady, derived, perhaps, from his father, who was, at times, overcast with a gloom that bordered on insanity. When to this it is added, that Johnson, about the age of twenty, drew up a description of his infirmities, for Dr. Swinfen, at that time an eminent physician, in Staffordshire; and received an answer to his letter, importing, that the symptoms indicated a future privation of reason; who can wonder, that he was troubled with melancholy, and dejection of spirit? An appre-



hension of the worst calamity that can befall human nature hung over him all the rest of his life, like the sword of the tyrant suspended over his guest. In his sixtieth year he had a mind to write the history of his melancholy; but he desisted, not knowing whether it would not too much disturb him. In a Latin poem, however, to which he has prefixed, as a title, ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ, he has left a picture of himself, drawn with as much truth, and as firm a hand, as can be seen in the portraits of Hogarth, or sir Joshua Reynolds. The learned reader will find the original poem in this volume; and it is hoped, that a translation, or rather imitation, of so curious a piece, will not be improper in this place.

"KNOW YOURSELF.

(AFTER REVISING AND ENLARGING THE ENGLISH LEXICON, OR DICTIONARY.)

"When Scaliger, whole years of labour past,
Beheld his lexicon complete at last,
And weary of his task, with wond'ring eyes,
Saw, from words pil'd on words, a fabric rise,
He curs'd the industry, inertly strong,
In creeping toil that could persist so long;
And if, enrag'd he cried, heav'n meant to shed
Its keenest vengeance on the guilty head,
The drudgery of words the damn'd would know,
Doom'd to write lexicons in endless woe.[1]

"Yes, you had cause, great genius, to repent;
'You lost good days, that might be better spent;'
You well might grudge the hours of ling'ring pain,
And view your learned labours with disdain.
To you were given the large expanded mind,
The flame of genius, and the taste refin'd.
'Twas yours, on eagle wings, aloft to soar,
And, amidst rolling worlds, the great first cause explore;
To fix the æras of recorded time,
And live in ev'ry age and ev'ry clime;
Record the chiefs, who propt their country's cause;
Who founded empires, and establish'd laws;
To learn whate'er the sage, with virtue fraught,
Whate'er the muse of moral wisdom taught.
These were your quarry; these to you were known,
And the world's ample volume was your own.

"Yet, warn'd by me, ye pigmy wits, beware,
Nor with immortal Scaliger compare.

[1] See Scaliger's epigram on this subject, (communicated, without doubt, by Dr. Johnson,) Gent. Mag., 1748, p. 8.

For me, though his example strike my view,
Oh! not for me his footsteps to pursue.
Whether first nature, unpropitious, cold,
This clay compounded in a ruder mould;
Or the slow current, loit'ring at my heart,
No gleam of wit or fancy can impart;
Whate'er the cause, from me no numbers flow,
No visions warm me, and no raptures glow.
A mind like Scaliger's, superior still,
No grief could conquer, no misfortune chill.
Though, for the maze of words, his native skies
He seem'd to quit, 'twas but again to rise;
To mount, once more, to the bright source of day
And view the wonders of th' ethereal way.
The love of fame his gen'rous bosom fir'd;
Each science hail'd him, and each muse inspir'd.
For him the sons of learning trimm'd the bays,
And nations grew harmonious in his praise.

"My task perform'd, and all my labours o'er,
For me what lot has fortune now in store?
The listless will succeeds, that worst disease,
The rack of indolence, the sluggish ease.
Care grows on care, and o'er my aching brain
Black melancholy pours her morbid train.
No kind relief, no lenitive at hand,
I seek, at midnight clubs, the social band;
But midnight clubs, where wit with noise conspir

While passions, error, phantoms of the brain,
And vain opinions, fill the dark domain;
A dreary void, where fears, with grief combin'd,
Waste all within, and desolate the mind.

"What then remains? Must I, in slow decline,
To mute inglorious ease old age resign?
Or, bold ambition kindling in my breast,
Attempt some arduous task? Or, were it best,
Brooding o'er lexicons to pass the day,
And in that labour drudge my life away?"

Such is the picture for which Dr. Johnson sat to himself. He gives the prominent features of his character; his lassitude, his morbid melancholy, his love of fame, his dejection, his tavern-parties, and his wandering reveries, "Vacuæ mala somnia mentis," about which so much has been written; all are painted in miniature, but in vivid colours, by his own hand. His idea of writing more dictionaries was not merely said in verse. Mr. Hamilton, who was at that time an eminent printer, and well acquainted with Dr. Johnson, remembers that he engaged in a Commercial Dictionary, and, as appears by the receipts in his possession, was paid his price for several sheets; but he soon relinquished the undertaking. It is probable, that he found himself not sufficiently versed in that branch of knowledge.

He was again reduced to the expedient of short compositions, for the supply of the day. The writer of this narrative has now before him a letter, in Dr. Johnson's handwriting, which shows the distress and melancholy situation of the man, who had written the Rambler, and finished the great work of his Dictionary. The letter is directed to Mr. Richardson, the author of Clarissa, and is as follows:

"SIR,

"I am obliged to entreat your assistance. I am now under an arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings. Mr. Strahan, from whom I should have received the necessary help in this case, is not at home; and I am afraid of not finding Mr. Millar. If you will be so good as to send me this sum, I will very gratefully repay you, and add it to all former obligations. I am, sir,

"Your most obedient,
"and most humble servant,
"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

"Gough square, 16 March."

In the margin of this letter, there is a memorandum in these words:

"March 16, 1756, sent six guineas. Witness, Wm. Richardson." For the honour of an admired writer it is to be regretted, that we do not find a more liberal entry. To his friend, in distress, he sent eight shillings more than was wanted. Had an incident of this kind occurred in one of his romances, Richardson would have known how to grace his hero; but in fictitious scenes, generosity costs the writer nothing.

About this time Johnson contributed several papers to a periodical miscellany, called The Visiter, from motives which are highly honourable to him, a compassionate regard for the late Mr. Christopher Smart. The criticism on Pope's epitaphs appeared in that work. In a short time after, he became a reviewer in the Literary magazine, under the auspices of the late Mr. Newbery, a man of a projecting head, good taste, and great industry. This employment engrossed but little of Johnson's time. He resigned himself to indolence, took no exercise, rose about two, and then received the visits of his friends. Authors, long since forgotten, waited on him, as their oracle, and he gave responses in the chair of criticism. He listened to the complaints, the schemes, and the hopes and fears of a crowd of inferior writers, "who," he said, in the words of Roger Ascham, "lived *men knew not how, and died obscure, men marked not when.*" He believed, that he could give a better history of Grub street than any man living. His house was filled with a succession of visiters till four or five in the evening. During the whole time he presided at his tea-table. Tea was his favourite beverage; and, when the late Jonas Hanway pronounced his anathema against the use of tea, Johnson rose in defence of his habitual practice, declaring himself "in that article, a hardened sinner, who had for years diluted his meals with the infusion of that fascinating plant; whose tea-kettle had no time to cool; who, with tea, solaced the midnight hour, and with tea welcomed the morning."

The proposal for a new edition of Shakespeare, which had formerly miscarried, was resumed in the year 1756. The booksellers readily agreed to his terms: and subscription-tickets were issued out. For undertaking this work, money, he confessed, was the inciting motive. His friends exerted themselves to promote his interest; and, in the mean time, he engaged in a new periodical production, called The Idler. The first number appeared on Saturday, April 15, 1758; and the last, April 5, 1760. The profits of this work, and the subscriptions for the new edition of Shakespeare, were the means by which he supported himself for four or five years. In 1759, was published

Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia. His translation of Lobo's Voyage to Abissinia, seems to have pointed out that country for the scene of action; and Rassela Christos, the general of sultan Sequed, mentioned in that work, most probably suggested the name of the prince. The author wanted to set out on a journey to Lichfield, in order to pay the last offices of filial piety to his mother, who, at the age of ninety, was then near her dissolution; but money was necessary. Mr. Johnston, a bookseller, who has, long since, left off business, gave one hundred pounds for the copy. With this supply Johnson set out for Lichfield; but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of a parent whom he loved. He attended the funeral, which, as appears among his memorandums, was on the 23rd of January, 1759.

Johnson now found it necessary to retrench his expenses. He gave up his house in Gough square. Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. He retired to Gray's inn, and soon removed to chambers in the Inner Temple lane, where he lived in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature: "Magni stat nominis umbra." Mr. Fitzherbert, the father of lord St. Helens, the present minister at Madrid, a man distinguished, through life, for his benevolence and other amiable qualities, used to say, that he paid a morning visit to Johnson, intending, from his chambers, to send a letter into the city; but, to his great surprise, he found an author by profession, without pen, ink, or paper. The present bishop of Salisbury was also among those who endeavoured, by constant attention, to sooth the cares of a mind, which he knew to be afflicted with gloomy apprehensions. At one of the parties made at his house, Boscovich, the jesuit, who had then lately introduced the Newtonian philosophy at Rome, and, after publishing an elegant Latin poem on the subject, was made a fellow of the Royal Society, was one of the company invited to meet Dr. Johnson. The conversation, at first, was mostly in French. Johnson, though thoroughly versed in that language, and a professed admirer of Boileau and La Bruyère, did not understand its pronunciation, nor could he speak it himself with propriety. For the rest of the evening the talk was in Latin. Boscovich had a ready current flow of that flimsy phraseology, with which a priest may travel through Italy, Spain, and Germany. Johnson scorned what he called colloquial barbarisms. It was his pride to speak his best. He went on, after a little practice, with as much facility as if it was his native tongue. One sentence this writer well remembers. Observing that Fontenelle, at first, opposed the Newtonian philosophy, and embraced it afterwards, his words were: "Fontinellus, ni fallor, in extrema senectute, fuit transfuga ad castra Newtoniana."

We have now travelled through that part of Dr. Johnson's life, which was a perpetual struggle with difficulties. Halcyon days are now to open upon him. In the month of May, 1762, his majesty, to reward literary merit, signified his pleasure to grant to Johnson a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The earl of Bute was minister. Lord Loughborough, who, perhaps, was originally a mover in the business, had authority to mention it. He was well acquainted with Johnson; but, having heard much of his independent spirit, and of the downfal of Osborne, the bookseller, he did not know but his benevolence might be rewarded with a folio on his head. He desired the author of these memoirs to undertake the task. The writer thought the opportunity of doing so much good the most happy incident in his life. He went, without delay, to the chambers, in the Inner Temple lane, which, in fact, were the abode of wretchedness. By slow and studied approaches the message was disclosed. Johnson made a long pause: he asked if it was seriously intended: he fell into a profound meditation, and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him. He was told, "that he, at least, did not come within the definition." He desired to meet next day, and dine at the Mitre tavern. At that meeting he gave up all his scruples. On the following day, lord Loughborough conducted him to the earl of Bute. The conversation that passed, was, in the evening, related to this writer, by Dr. Johnson. He expressed his sense of his majesty's bounty, and thought himself the more highly honoured, as the favour was not bestowed on him for having dipped his pen in faction. "No, sir," said lord Bute, "it is not offered to you for having dipped your pen in faction, nor with a design that you ever should." Sir John Hawkins will have it, that, after this interview, Johnson was often pressed to wait on lord Bute, but with a sullen spirit refused to comply. However that be, Johnson was never heard to utter a disrespectful word of that nobleman. The writer of this essay remembers a circumstance, which may throw some light on this subject. The late Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, whom Johnson loved and respected, contended for the pre-eminence of the Scotch writers; and Ferguson's book on Civil Society, then on the eve of publication, he said, would give the laurel to North Britain. "Alas! what can he do upon that subject?" said Johnson: "Aristotle, Polybius, Grotius, Puffendorf, and Burlamaqui, have reaped in that field before him." "He will treat it," said Dr. Rose, "in a new manner." "A new manner! Buckinger had no hands, and he wrote his name with his toes, at Charing Cross, for half a crown a piece; that was a new



manner of writing!" Dr. Rose replied: "If that will not satisfy you, I will name a writer, whom you must allow to be the best in the kingdom." "Who is that?" "The earl of Bute, when he wrote an order for your pension." "There, sir," said Johnson, "you have me in the toil: to lord Bute I must allow whatever praise you claim for him." Ingratitude was no part of Johnson's character.

Being now in the possession of a regular income, Johnson left his chambers in the Temple, and, once more, became master of a house in Johnson's court, Fleet street. Dr. Levet, his friend and physician in ordinary,[1] paid his daily visits, with assiduity; made tea all the morning, talked what he had to say, and did not expect an answer. Mrs. Williams had her apartment in the house, and entertained her benefactor with more enlarged conversation. Chymistry was a part of Johnson's amusement. For this love of experimental philosophy, sir John Hawkins thinks an apology necessary. He tells us, with great gravity, that curiosity was the only object in view; not an intention to grow suddenly rich by the philosopher's stone, or the transmutation of metals. To enlarge this circle, Johnson, once more, had recourse to a literary club. This was at the Turk's head, in Gerard street, Soho, on every Tuesday evening through the year. The members were, besides himself, the right honourable Edmund Burke, sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, the late Mr. Topham Beauclerc, Mr. Langton, Mr. Chamier, sir J. Hawkins, and some others. Johnson's affection for sir Joshua was founded on a long acquaintance, and a thorough knowledge of the virtuous and amiable qualities of that excellent artist. He delighted in the conversation of Mr. Burke. He met him, for the first time, at Mr. Garrick's, several years ago. On the next day he said: "I suppose, Murphy, you are proud of your countryman: 'Cum talis sit, utinam noster esset!'" From that time, his constant observation was, "that a man of sense could not meet Mr. Burke, by accident, under a gateway, to avoid a shower, without being convinced, that he was the first man in England." Johnson felt not only kindness, but zeal and ardour for his friends. He did every thing in his power to advance the reputation of Dr. Goldsmith. He loved him, though he knew his failings, and particularly the leaven of envy, which corroded the mind of that elegant writer, and made him impatient, without disguise, of the praises bestowed on any person whatever. Of this infirmity, which marked Goldsmith's character, Johnson gave a remarkable instance. It happened that he went with sir Joshua Reynolds and

[1] See Johnson's poem on his death, vol. iii., p. 256.

Goldsmith to see the fantoccini, which were exhibited, some years ago, in or near the Haymarket. They admired the curious mechanism by which the puppets were made to walk the stage, draw a chair to the table, sit down, write a letter, and perform a variety of other actions, with such dexterity, that "though nature's journeymen made the men, they imitated humanity," to the astonishment of the spectator. The entertainment being over, the three friends retired to a tavern. Johnson and sir Joshua talked with pleasure of what they had seen; and, says Johnson, in a tone of admiration: "How the little fellow brandished his spontoon!" "There is nothing in it," replied Goldsmith, starting up with impatience, "give me a spontoon; I can do it as well myself."

Enjoying his amusements at his weekly club, and happy in a state of independence, Johnson gained, in the year 1765, another resource, which contributed, more than any thing else, to exempt him from the solicitudes of life. He was introduced to the late Mr. Thrale and his family. Mrs. Piozzi has related the fact, and it is, therefore, needless to repeat it in this place. The author of this narrative looks back to the share he had in that business, with self-congratulation, since he knows the tenderness which, from that time, soothed Johnson's cares at Streatham, and prolonged a valuable life. The subscribers to Shakespeare began to despair of ever seeing the promised edition. To acquit himself of this obligation, he went to work unwillingly, but proceeded with vigour. In the month of October, 1765, Shakespeare was published; and, in a short time after, the university of Dublin sent over a diploma, in honourable terms, creating him a doctor of laws. Oxford, in eight or ten years afterwards, followed the example; and, till then, Johnson never assumed the title of doctor. In 1766, his constitution seemed to be in a rapid decline; and that morbid melancholy, which often clouded his understanding, came upon him with a deeper gloom than ever. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale paid him a visit in this situation, and found him on his knees, with Dr. Delap, the rector of Lewes, in Sussex, beseeching God to continue to him the use of his understanding. Mr. Thrale took him to his house at Streatham, and Johnson, from that time, became a constant resident in the family. He went, occasionally, to the club in Gerard street, but his head-quarters were fixed at Streatham. An apartment was fitted up for him, and the library was greatly enlarged. Parties were constantly invited from town; and Johnson was every day at an elegant table, with select and polished company. Whatever could be devised by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale to promote the happiness, and esta-

blish the health of their guest, was studiously performed from that time to the end of Mr. Thrale's life. Johnson accompanied the family, in all their summer excursions, to Brighthelmstone, to Wales, and to Paris. It is but justice to Mr. Thrale to say, that a more ingenious frame of mind no man possessed. His education at Oxford gave him the habits of a gentleman; his amiable temper recommended his conversation; and the goodness of his heart made him a sincere friend. That he was the patron of Johnson, is an honour to his memory.

In petty disputes with contemporary writers, or the wits of the age, Johnson was seldom entangled. A single incident of that kind may not be unworthy of notice, since it happened with a man of great celebrity in his time. A number of friends dined with Garrick on a Christmas day. Foote was then in Ireland. It was said, at table, that the modern Aristophanes (so Foote was called) had been horsewhipped by a Dublin apothecary, for mimicking him on the stage. "I wonder," said Garrick, "that any man should show so much resentment to Foote; he has a patent for such liberties; nobody ever thought it worth his while to quarrel with him in London." "I am glad," said Johnson, "to find that the man is rising in the world." The expression was afterwards repeated to Foote, who, in return, gave out, that he would produce the Caliban of literature on the stage. Being informed of this design, Johnson sent word to Foote: "that the theatre being intended for the reformation of vice, he would step from the boxes on the stage, and correct him before the audience." Foote knew the intrepidity of his antagonist, and abandoned the design. No ill will ensued. Johnson used to say: "that for broad-faced mirth, Foote had not his equal."

Dr. Johnson's fame excited the curiosity of the king. His majesty expressed a desire to see a man of whom extraordinary things were said. Accordingly, the librarian at Buckingham house invited Johnson to see that elegant collection of books, at the same time giving a hint of what was intended. His majesty entered the room, and, among other things, asked the author, "if he meant to give the world any more of his compositions?" Johnson answered: "that he thought he had written enough." "And I should think so too," replied his majesty, "if you had not written so well."

Though Johnson thought he had written enough, his genius, even in spite of bodily sluggishness, could not lie still. In 1770 we find him entering the lists, as a political writer. The flame of discord that blazed throughout the nation, on the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes, and the

final determination of the house of commons, that Mr. Luttrell was duly elected by two hundred and six votes against eleven hundred and forty-three, spread a general spirit of discontent. To allay the tumult, Dr. Johnson published the False Alarm. Mrs. Piozzi informs us, "that this pamphlet was written at her house, between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve on Thursday night." This celerity has appeared wonderful to many, and some have doubted the truth. It may, however, be placed within the bounds of probability. Johnson has observed, that there are different methods of composition. Virgil was used to pour out a great number of verses in the morning, and pass the day in retrenching the exuberances, and correcting inaccuracies; and it was Pope's custom to write his first thoughts in his first words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them. Others employ, at once, memory and invention, and, with little intermediate use of the pen, form and polish large masses by continued meditation, and write their productions only, when, in their opinion, they have completed them. This last was Johnson's method. He never took his pen in hand till he had well weighed his subject, and grasped, in his mind, the sentiments, the train of argument, and the arrangement of the whole. As he often thought aloud, he had, perhaps, talked it over to himself. This may account for that rapidity with which, in general, he despatched his sheets to the press, without being at the trouble of a fair copy. Whatever may be the logic or eloquence of the False Alarm, the house of commons have since erased the resolution from the journals. But whether they have not left materials for a future controversy may be made a question.

In 1771, he published another tract, on the subject of Falkland islands. The design was to show the impropriety of going to war with Spain for an island, thrown aside from human use, stormy in winter, and barren in summer. For this work it is apparent, that materials were furnished by direction of the minister.

At the approach of the general election in 1774, he wrote a short discourse, called The Patriot, not with any visible application to Mr. Wilkes; but to teach the people to reject the leaders of opposition, who called themselves patriots. In 1775, he undertook a pamphlet of more importance, namely, Taxation no Tyranny, in answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American congress. The scope of the argument was, that distant colonies, which had, in their assemblies, a legislature of their own, were, notwithstanding, liable to be taxed in a British parliament, where they had neither

peers in one house, nor representatives in the other. He was of opinion, that this country was strong enough to enforce obedience. "When an Englishman," he says, "is told that the Americans shoot up like the hydra, he naturally considers how the hydra was destroyed." The event has shown how much he and the minister of that day were mistaken.

The account of the Tour to the Western Islands of Scotland, which was undertaken in the autumn of 1773, in company with Mr. Boswell, was not published till some time in the year 1775. This book has been variously received; by some extolled for the elegance of the narrative, and the depth of observation on life and manners; by others, as much condemned, as a work of avowed hostility to the Scotch nation. The praise was, beyond all question, fairly deserved; and the censure, on due examination, will appear hasty and ill-founded. That Johnson entertained some prejudices against the Scotch must not be dissembled. It is true, as Mr. Boswell says, "that he thought their success in England exceeded their proportion of real merit, and he could not but see in them that nationality which no liberal-minded Scotsman will deny." The author of these memoirs well remembers, that Johnson one day asked him, "have you observed the difference between your own country impudence and Scottish impudence?" The answer being the negative: "then I will tell you," said Johnson. "The impudence of an Irishman is the impudence of a fly, that buzzes about you, and you put it away, but it returns again, and flutters and teases you. The impudence of a Scotsman is the impudence of a leech, that fixes and sucks your blood." Upon another occasion, this writer went with him into the shop of Davies, the bookseller, in Russell street, Covent garden. Davies came running to him, almost out of breath with joy: "The Scots gentleman is come, sir; his principal wish is to see you; he is now in the back parlour." "Well, well, I'll see the gentleman," said Johnson. He walked towards the room. Mr. Boswell was the person. The writer followed, with no small curiosity. "I find," said Mr. Boswell, "that I am come to London, at a bad time, when great popular prejudice has gone forth against us North Britons; but, when I am talking to you, I am talking to a large and liberal mind, and you know that I cannot *help coming from Scotland.*" "Sir," said Johnson, "no more can the rest of your countrymen."[1]

He had other reasons that helped to alienate him from the natives

[1] For Boswell's own account of this introduction, see vol. i., pp. 319, 320.—*Editor.*

of Scotland. Being a cordial well-wisher to
church and state, he did not think that Calvin a
proper founders of a national religion. He m
distinction between the dissenters of Scotland a
England. To the former he imputed no disa
loyalty. Their soldiers and their officers had sl
zeal and courage in the service of Great Britain
used to say, were content with their own establish
without wishing, in the present age, to give an
church of England. This he was, at all times, r
therefore, declared, that, whenever he found a S
an Englishman was as a Scotchman, that Scotch
Englishman to him. In this, surely, there was
volence. The dissenters, on this side the Tweed,
a different light. Their religio , he frequently s
too political, too restless and ambitious. The d
kings, and erecting, on the ruins of the constitu
government, which lately issued from their pulpit
was, under a calm disguise, the principle that
hearts. He knew, that a wild democracy had ove
and commons; and that a set of republican f
not bow at the name of Jesus, had taken possessi
and all the parishes in the kingdom. That tho

the course of his tour, have been repaid with grateful acknowledgment, and, generally, with great elegance of expression. His crime is, that he found the country bare of trees, and he has stated the fact. This, Mr. Boswell, in his tour to the Hebrides, has told us, was resented, by his countrymen, with anger, inflamed to rancour; but he admits that there are few trees on the east side of Scotland. Mr. Pennant, in his tour, says, that, in some parts of the eastern side of the country, he saw several large plantations of pine, planted by gentlemen near their seats; and, in this respect, such a laudable spirit prevails, that, in another half century, it never shall be said, "To spy the nakedness of the land are you come." Johnson could not wait for that half-century, and, therefore, mentioned things as he found them. If, in any thing, he has been mistaken, he has made a fair apology, in the last paragraph of his book, avowing with candour: "That he may have been surprised by modes of life, and appearances of nature, that are familiar to men of wider survey, and more varied conversation. Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal: and he is conscious that his thoughts on national manners, are the thoughts of one who has seen but little."

The poems of Ossian made a part of Johnson's inquiry, during his residence in Scotland and the Hebrides. On his return to England, November, 1773, a storm seemed to be gathering over his head; but the cloud never burst, and the thunder never fell. Ossian, it is well known, was presented to the public, as a translation from the Erse; but that this was a fraud, Johnson declared, without hesitation. "The Erse," he says, "was always oral only, and never a written language. The Welsh and the Irish were more cultivated. In Erse, there was in the world not a single manuscript a hundred years old. Martin, who, in the last century, published an account of the Western Islands, mentions Irish, but never Erse manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time. The bards could not read; if they could, they might, probably, have written. But the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, and, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more. If there is a manuscript from which the translation was made, in what age was it written, and where is it? If it was collected from oral recitation, it could only be in detached parts, and scattered fragments: the whole is too long to be remembered. Who put it together in its present form?" For these, and such like reasons, Johnson calls the whole an imposture. He adds, "The editor, or author, never could show the original, nor can it be shown by any other. To revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of

insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt." This reasoning carries with it great weight. It roused the resentment of Mr. Macpherson. He sent a threatening letter to the author; and Johnson answered him in the rough phrase of stern defiance. The two heroes frowned at a distance, but never came to action.

In the year 1777, the misfortunes of Dr. Dodd excited his compassion. He wrote a speech for that unhappy man, when called up to receive judgment of death; besides two petitions, one to the king, and another to the queen; and a sermon to be preached by Dodd to the convicts in Newgate. It may appear trifling to add, that, about the same time, he wrote a prologue to the comedy of a Word to the Wise, written by Hugh Kelly. The play, some years before, had been damned by a party on the first night. It was revived for the benefit of the author's widow. Mrs. Piozzi relates, that when Johnson was rallied for these exertions, so close to one another, his answer was, "When they come to me with a dying parson, and a dead stay-maker, what can a man do?" We come now to the last of his literary labours. At the request of the booksellers, he undertook the Lives of the Poets. The first publication was in 1779, and the whole was completed in 1781. In a memorandum of that year, he says, some time in March he finished the Lives of the Poets, which he wrote in his usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, yet working with vigour and haste. In another place, he hopes they are written in such a manner, as may tend to the promotion of piety. That the history of so many men, who, in their different degrees, made themselves conspicuous in their time, was not written recently after their deaths, seems to be an omission that does no honour to the republic of letters. Their contemporaries, in general, looked on with calm indifference, and suffered wit and genius to vanish out of the world in total silence, unregarded and unlamented. Was there no friend to pay the tribute of a tear? No just observer of life to record the virtues of the deceased? Was even envy silent? It seemed to have been agreed, that if an author's works survived, the history of the man was to give no moral lesson to after-ages. If tradition told us that Ben Jonson went to the Devil tavern; that Shakespeare stole deer, and held the stirrup at play-house doors; that Dryden frequented Button's coffee-house; curiosity was lulled asleep, and biography forgot the best part of her function, which is, to instruct mankind by examples taken from the school of life. This task remained for Dr. Johnson, when years had rolled away; when the channels of informa-

tion were, for the most part, choked up, and little remained besides doubtful anecdote, uncertain tradition, and vague report.

"Nunc situs informis premit et deserta vetustas."

The value of biography has been better understood in other ages, and in other countries. Tacitus informs us, that to record the lives and characters of illustrious men, was the practice of the Roman authors, in the early periods of the republic. In France, the example has been followed. Fontenelle, D'Alembert, and monsieur Thomas, have left models in this kind of composition. They have embalmed the dead. But it is true, that they had incitements and advantages, even at a distant day, which could not, by any diligence, be obtained by Dr. Johnson. The wits of France had ample materials. They lived in a nation of critics, who had, at heart, the honour done to their country by their poets, their heroes, and their philosophers. They had, besides, an academy of belles-lettres, where genius was cultivated, refined, and encouraged. They had the tracts, the essays, and dissertations, which remain in the memoirs of the academy, and they had the speeches of the several members, delivered at their first admission to a seat in that learned assembly. In those speeches the new academician did ample justice to the memory of his predecessor; and though his harangue was decorated with the colours of eloquence, and was, for that reason, called panegyric, yet, being pronounced before qualified judges, who knew the talents, the conduct, and morals of the deceased, the speaker could not, with propriety, wander into the regions of fiction. The truth was known, before it was adorned. The academy saw the marble before the artist polished it. But this country has had no academy of literature. The public mind, for centuries, has been engrossed by party and faction; "by the madness of many for the gain of a few;" by civil wars, religious dissensions, trade and commerce, and the arts of accumulating wealth. Amidst such attentions, who can wonder that cold praise has been often the only reward of merit? In this country, Dr. Nathaniel Hodges, who, like the good bishop of Marseilles, drew purer breath amidst the contagion of the plague in London, and, during the whole time, continued in the city, administering medical assistance, was suffered, as Johnson used to relate, with tears in his eyes, to die for debt in a gaol. In this country, the man who brought the New river to London, was ruined by that noble project; and, in this country, Otway died for want, on Tower hill; Butler, the great author of Hudibras, whose name can only die with the English

language, was left to languish in poverty; the particulars of his life almost unknown, and scarce a vestige of him left, except his immortal poem. Had there been an academy of literature, the lives, at least, of those celebrated persons, would have been written for the benefit of posterity. Swift, it seems, had the idea of such an institution, and proposed it to lord Oxford; but whig and tory were more important objects. It is needless to dissemble, that Dr. Johnson, in the life of Roscommon, talks of the inutility of such a project. "In this country," he says, "an academy could be expected to do but little. If an academician's place were profitable, it would be given by interest; if attendance were gratuitous, it would be rarely paid, and no man would endure the least disgust. Unanimity is impossible, and debate would separate the assembly." To this it may be sufficient to answer, that the Royal society has not been dissolved by sullen disgust; and the modern academy, at Somerset house, has already performed much, and promises more. Unanimity is not necessary to such an assembly. On the contrary, by difference of opinion, and collision of sentiment, the cause of literature would thrive and flourish. The true principles of criticism, the secret of fine writing, the investigation of antiquities, and other interesting subjects, might occasion a clash of opinions; but, in that contention, truth would receive illustration, and the essays of the several members would supply the memoirs of the academy. "But," says Dr. Johnson, "suppose the philological decree made and promulgated, what would be its authority? In absolute government there is, sometimes, a general reverence paid to all that has the sanction of power, the countenance of greatness. How little this is the state of our country, needs not to be told. The edicts of an English academy would, probably, be read by many, only that they may be sure to disobey them. The present manners of the nation would deride authority, and, therefore, nothing is left, but that every writer should criticise himself." This, surely, is not conclusive. It is by the standard of the best writers, that every man settles, for himself, his plan of legitimate composition; and since the authority of superior genius is acknowledged, that authority, which the individual obtains, would not be lessened by an association with others of distinguished ability. It may, therefore, be inferred, that an academy of literature would be an establishment highly useful, and an honour to literature. In such an institution, profitable places would not be wanted. "Vatis avarus haud facile est animus;" and the minister, who shall find leisure, from party and faction, to carry such a scheme into execution, will,

in all probability, be respected by posterity, as the Mæcenas of letters.

We now take leave of Dr. Johnson, as an author. Four volumes of his Lives of the Poets were published in 1778, and the work was completed in 1781. Should biography fall again into disuse, there will not always be a Johnson to look back through a century, and give a body of critical and moral instruction. In April, 1781, he lost his friend Mr. Thrale. His own words, in his diary, will best tell that melancholy event. "On Wednesday, the 11th of April, was buried my dear friend Mr. Thrale, who died on Wednesday the 4th, and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. About five, I think, on Wednesday morning, he expired. I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked, for the last time, upon the face, that, for fifteen years before, had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity. Farewell: may God, that delighteth in mercy, have had mercy on thee. I had constantly prayed for him before his death. The decease of him, from whose friendship I had obtained many opportunities of amusement, and to whom I turned my thoughts, as to a refuge from misfortunes, has left me heavy. But my business is with myself" (vol. iii., p. 211). From the close of his last work, the malady that persecuted him through life, came upon him with alarming severity, and his constitution declined apace. In 1782, his old friend, Levet, expired, without warning and without a groan. Events like these reminded Johnson of his own mortality. He continued his visits to Mrs. Thrale, at Streatham, to the 7th day of October, 1782, when, having first composed a prayer for the happiness of a family, with whom he had, for many years, enjoyed the pleasures and comforts of life, he removed to his own house in town. He says he was up early in the morning, and read fortuitously in the Gospel, "which was his parting use of the library." The merit of the family is manifested by the sense he had of it, and we see his heart overflowing with gratitude. He leaves the place with regret, and "casts a lingering look behind."

The few remaining occurrences may be soon despatched. In the month of June, 1783, Johnson had a paralytic stroke, which affected his speech only. He wrote to Dr. Taylor, of Westminster; and to his friend Mr. Allen, the printer, who lived at the next door. Dr. Brocklesby arrived in a short time, and by his care, and that of Dr. Heberden, Johnson soon recovered. During his illness, the writer of this narrative visited him, and found him reading Dr. Watson's Chymistry. Articulating with difficulty, he said, "From this book,

he who knows nothing may learn a great deal; and he who knows, will be pleased to find his knowledge recalled to his mind in a manner highly pleasing." In the month of August he set out for Lichfield, on a visit to Mrs. Lucy Porter, the daughter of his wife by her first husband; and, in his way back, paid his respects to Dr. Adams, at Oxford. Mrs. Williams died, at his house in Bolt court, in the month of September, during his absence. This was another shock to a mind like his, ever agitated by the thoughts of futurity. The contemplation of his own approaching end was constantly before his eyes; and the prospect of death, he declared, was terrible. For many years, when he was not disposed to enter into the conversation going forward, whoever sat near his chair, might hear him repeating, from Shakespeare,

"Aye, but to die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods" ———

And from Milton,

——— "Who would lose,
For fear of pain, this intellectual being?"

By the death of Mrs. Williams he was left in a state of destitution, with nobody but Frank, his black servant, to sooth his anxious moments. In November, 1783, he was swelled from head to foot with a dropsy. Dr. Brocklesby, with that benevolence with which he always assists his friends, paid his visits with assiduity. The medicines prescribed were so efficacious, that, in a few days, Johnson, while he was offering up his prayers, was suddenly obliged to rise, and in the course of the day, discharged twenty pints of water.

Johnson, being eased of his dropsy, began to entertain hopes that the vigour of his constitution was not entirely broken. For the sake of conversing with his friends, he established a conversation club, to meet on every Wednesday evening; and, to serve a man whom he had known in Mr. Thrale's household for many years, the place was fixed at his house, in Essex street, near the Temple. To answer the malignant remarks of sir John Hawkins, on this subject, were a wretched waste of time. Professing to be Johnson's friend, that biographer has raised more objections to his character, than all the enemies to that excellent man. Sir John had a root of bitterness that "put rancours in the vessel of his peace." Fielding, he says, was the

inventor of a cant phrase, "Goodness of heart, which means little more than the virtue of a horse or a dog." He should have known, that kind affections are the essence of virtue: they are the will of God implanted in our nature, to aid and strengthen moral obligation; they incite to action: a sense of benevolence is no less necessary than a sense of duty. Good affections are an ornament, not only to an author, but to his writings. He who shows himself upon a cold scent for opportunities to bark and snarl throughout a volume of six hundred pages, may, if he will, pretend to moralize; but goodness of heart, or, to use that politer phrase, "the virtue of a horse or a dog," would redound more to his honour. But sir John is no more: our business is with Johnson. The members of his club were respectable for their rank, their talents, and their literature. They attended with punctuality till about Midsummer, 1784, when, with some appearance of health, Johnson went into Derbyshire, and thence to Lichfield. While he was in that part of the world, his friends, in town, were labouring for his benefit. The air of a more southern climate, they thought, might prolong a valuable life. But a pension of three hundred pounds a year, was a slender fund for a travelling valetudinarian, and it was not then known that he had saved a moderate sum of money. Mr. Boswell and sir Joshua Reynolds undertook to solicit the patronage of the chancellor. With lord Thurlow, while he was at the bar, Johnson was well acquainted. He was often heard to say, "Thurlow is a man of such vigour of mind, that I never knew I was to meet him, but—I was going to say, I was afraid, but that would not be true, for I never was afraid of any man; but I never knew that I was to meet Thurlow, but I knew I had something to encounter." The chancellor undertook to recommend Johnson's case; but without success. To protract, if possible, the days of a man, whom he respected, he offered to advance the sum of five hundred pounds. Being informed of this at Lichfield, Johnson wrote the following letter:

"My Lord,

"After a long, and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty, so liberally bestowed, I should gladly receive, if my condition made it necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that, if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the

continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians; and I was very desirous that your lordship should be told it, by sir Joshua Reynolds, as an event very uncertain; for, if I grew much better, I should not be willing; if much worse, I should not be able to migrate. Your lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet, as I have had no long time to brood hopes, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and from your lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men, like you, are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit.

"I am, my lord, your lordship's most obliged,
"most grateful, and most humble servant,
"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

"September, 1784."

We have, in this instance, the exertion of two congenial minds; one, with a generous impulse, relieving merit in distress; and the other, by gratitude and dignity of sentiment, rising to an equal elevation.

It seems, however, that greatness of mind is not confined to greatness of rank. Dr. Brocklesby was not content to assist with his medical art; he resolved to minister to his patient's mind, and pluck from his memory the sorrow which the late refusal from a high quarter might occasion. To enable him to visit the south of France, in pursuit of health, he offered, from his own funds, an annuity of one hundred pounds, payable quarterly. This was a sweet oblivious antidote, but it was not accepted, for the reasons assigned to the chancellor. The proposal, however, will do honour to Dr. Brocklesby, as long as liberal sentiment shall be ranked among the social virtues.

In the month of October, 1784, we find Dr. Johnson corresponding with Mr. Nichols, the intelligent compiler of the Gentleman's Magazine, and, in the languor of sickness, still desirous to contribute all in his power to the advancement of science and useful knowledge. He says, in a letter to that gentleman, dated Lichfield, October 20, that "he should be glad to give so skilful a lover of antiquities any information." He adds, "At Ashbourne, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow Mr. Bowyer's Life, a book, so full of contemporary history, that a literary man must find some of his old friends. I thought that I could, now and then, have told you some hints worth your notice: we, perhaps, may talk a life over. I hope we

shall be much together. You must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but, I think, he was a very good man. I have made very little progress in recovery. I am very weak, and very sleepless; but I live on and hope."

In that languid condition he arrived, on the 16th of November, at his house in Bolt court, there to end his days. He laboured with the dropsy and an asthma. He was attended by Dr. Heberden, Dr. Warren, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikshank, the eminent surgeon. Eternity presented to his mind an awful prospect, and, with as much virtue as, perhaps, ever is the lot of man, he shuddered at the thought of his dissolution. His friends awakened the comfortable reflection of a well-spent life; and, as his end drew near, they had the satisfaction of seeing him composed, and even cheerful, insomuch that he was able, in the course of his restless nights, to make translations of Greek epigrams from the Anthologia; and to compose a Latin epitaph for his father, his mother, and his brother Nathaniel. He meditated, at the same time, a Latin inscription to the memory of Garrick; but his vigour was exhausted.

His love of literature was a passion that stuck to his last sand. Seven days before his death he wrote the following letter to his friend Mr. Nichols:

"SIR,

"The late learned Mr. Swinton, of Oxford, having one day remarked, that one man, meaning, I suppose, no man but himself, could assign all the parts of the Ancient Universal History to their proper authors, at the request of sir Robert Chambers, or myself, gave the account which I now transmit to you, in his own hand, being willing that of so great a work the history should be known, and that each writer should receive his due proportion of praise from posterity.

"I recommend to you to preserve this scrap of literary intelligence, in Mr. Swinton's own hand, or to deposit it in the Museum,[1] that the veracity of this account may never be doubted.

"I am, sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"Dec. 6, 1784."

[1] It is there deposited.

Mr. Swinton.

The History of the Carthaginians.
——————— Numidians.
——————— Mauritanians.
——————— Gætulians.
——————— Garamantes.
——————— Melano-Gætulians.
——————— Nigritæ.
——————— Cyrenaica.
——————— Marmarica.
——————— Regio Syrtica.
——————— Turks, Tartars, and Moguls.
——————— Indians.
——————— Chinese.

The Dissertation on the peopling of America.
The Dissertation on the Independency of the Arabs.
The Cosmogony, and a small part of the History immediately following. By Mr. Sale.
To the Birth of Abraham. Chiefly by Mr. Shelvock.
History of the Jews, Gauls, and Spaniards. By Mr. Psalmanazar.
Xenophon's Retreat. By the same.
History of the Persians, and the Constantinopolitan Empire. By Dr. Campbell.
History of the Romans. By Mr. Bower.[1]

On the morning of December 7, Dr. Johnson requested to see Mr. Nichols. A few days before, he had borrowed some of the early volumes of the magazine, with a professed intention to point out the pieces which he had written in that collection. The books lay on the table, with many leaves doubled down, and, in particular, those which contained his share in the parliamentary debates. Such was the goodness of Johnson's heart, that he then declared, that "those debates were the only parts of his writings which gave him any compunction: but that, at the time he wrote them, he had no conception that he was imposing upon the world, though they were, frequently, written upon very slender materials, and often from none at all, the

[1] Before this authentic communication, Mr. Nichols had given, in the volume of the Gentleman's Magazine, for 1781, p. 370, the following account of the Universal History. The proposals were published October 6, 1729; and the authors of the first seven volumes were,

Vol. I. Mr. Sale, translator of the Koran.
II. George Psalmanazar.
III. George Psalmanazar.
Archibald Bower.
Captain Shelvock.
Dr. Campbell.
Vol. IV. The same as vol. iii.
V. Mr. Bower.
VI. Mr. Bower.
Rev. John Swinton.
VII. Mr. Swinton.
Mr. Bower.

mere coinage of his own imagination." He added, "that he never wrote any part of his work with equal velocity." "Three columns of the magazine in an hour," he said, "was no uncommon effort; which was faster than most persons could have transcribed that quantity. In one day, in particular, and that not a very long one, he wrote twelve pages, more in quantity than ever he wrote at any other time, except in the Life of Savage, of which forty-eight pages, in octavo, were the production of one long day, including a part of the night."

In the course of the conversation, he asked whether any of the family of Faden, the printer, were living. Being told that the geographer, near Charing Cross, was Faden's son, he said, after a short pause, "I borrowed a guinea of his father near thirty years ago; be so good as to take this, and pay it for me."

Wishing to discharge every duty, and every obligation, Johnson recollected another debt of ten pounds, which he had borrowed from his friend, Mr. Hamilton, the printer, about twenty years before. He sent the money to Mr. Hamilton, at his house in Bedford row, with an apology for the length of time. The reverend Mr. Strahan was the bearer of the message, about four or five days before Johnson breathed his last.

Mr. Sastres, whom Dr. Johnson esteemed and mentioned in his will, entered the room, during his illness. Dr. Johnson, as soon as he saw him, stretched forth his hand, and, in a tone of lamentation, called out, "Jam moriturus!" But the love of life was still an active principle. Feeling himself swelled with the dropsy, he conceived that, by incisions in his legs, the water might be discharged. Mr. Cruikshank apprehended that a mortification might be the consequence; but, to appease a distempered fancy, he gently lanced the surface. Johnson cried out, "Deeper, deeper! I want length of life, and you are afraid of giving me pain, which I do not value."

On the 8th of December, the reverend Mr. Strahan drew his will, by which, after a few legacies, the residue, amounting to about fifteen hundred pounds, was bequeathed to Frank, the black servant, formerly consigned to the testator by his friend Dr. Bathurst.

The history of a death-bed is painful. Mr. Strahan informs us, that the strength of religion prevailed against the infirmity of nature; and his foreboding dread of the divine justice subsided into a pious trust, and humble hope of mercy, at the throne of grace. On Monday, the 13th day of December, the last of his existence on this side the grave, the desire of life returned with all its former vehemence. He

still imagined, that, by puncturing his legs, relief might be obtained. At eight in the morning he tried the experiment, but no water followed. In an hour or two after, he fell into a doze, and about seven in the evening expired without a groan.

On the 20th of the month his remains, with due solemnities, and a numerous attendance of his friends, were buried in Westminster abbey, near the foot of Shakespeare's monument, and close to the grave of the late Mr. Garrick. The funeral service was read by his friend, Dr. Taylor.

A black marble over his grave has the following inscription:

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
obiit XIII die Decembris,
Anno Domini
MDCCLXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV.

If we now look back, as from an eminence, to view the scenes of life, and the literary labours in which Dr. Johnson was engaged, we may be able to delineate the features of the man, and to form an estimate of his genius.

As a man, Dr. Johnson stands displayed in open daylight. Nothing remains undiscovered. Whatever he said is known; and without allowing him the usual privilege of hazarding sentiments, and advancing positions for mere amusement, or the pleasure of discussion, criticism has endeavoured to make him answerable for what, perhaps, he never seriously thought. His diary, which has been printed, discovers still more. We have before us the very heart of the man, with all his inward consciousness; and yet neither in the open paths of life, nor in his secret recesses, has any one vice been discovered. We see him reviewing every year of his life, and severely censuring himself, for not keeping resolutions, which morbid melancholy, and other bodily infirmities, rendered impracticable. We see him, for every little defect, imposing on himself voluntary penance, going through the day with only one cup of tea without milk, and to the last, amidst paroxysms and remissions of illness, forming plans of study and resolutions to mend his life.[1] Many of his scruples may be called weaknesses; but they are the weaknesses of a good, a pious, and most excellent man.

His person, it is well known, was large and unwieldy. His nerves were affected by that disorder, for which, at two years of age, he was

[1] On the subject of voluntary penance, see the Rambler, No. 110.

presented to the royal touch. His head shook, and involuntary motions made it uncertain that his legs and arms would, even at a tea-table, remain in their proper place. A person of lord Chesterfield's delicacy might, in his company, be in a fever. He would, sometimes, of his own accord, do things inconsistent with the established modes of behaviour. Sitting at table with the celebrated Mrs. Cholmondeley, who exerted herself to circulate the subscription for Shakespeare, he took hold of her hand, in the middle of dinner, and held it close to his eye, wondering at the delicacy and whiteness, till, with a smile, she asked, "Will he give it to me again, when he has done with it?" The exteriors of politeness did not belong to Johnson. Even that civility, which proceeds, or ought to proceed, from the mind, was sometimes violated. His morbid melancholy had an effect on his temper; his passions were irritable; and the pride of science, as well as of a fierce independent spirit, inflamed him, on some occasions, above all bounds of moderation. Though not in the shade of academic bowers, he led a scholastic life; and the habit of pronouncing decisions to his friends and visitors, gave him a dictatorial manner, which was much enforced by a voice naturally loud, and often overstretched. Metaphysical discussion, moral theory, systems of religion, and anecdotes of literature, were his favourite topics. General history had little of his regard. Biography was his delight. The proper study of mankind is man. Sooner than hear of the Punic war, he would be rude to the person that introduced the subject.

Johnson was born a logician; one of those, to whom only books of logic are said to be of use. In consequence of his skill in that art, he loved argumentation. No man thought more profoundly, nor with such acute discernment. A fallacy could not stand before him; it was sure to be refuted by strength of reasoning, and a precision, both in idea and expression, almost unequalled. When he chose, by apt illustration, to place the argument of his adversary in a ludicrous light, one was almost inclined to think ridicule the test of truth. He was surprised to be told, but it is certainly true, that, with great powers of mind, wit and humour were his shining talents. That he often argued for the sake of triumph over his adversary, cannot be dissembled. Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, has been heard to tell of a friend of his, who thanked him for introducing him to Dr. Johnson, as he had been convinced, in the course of a long dispute, that an opinion, which he had embraced as a settled truth, was no better than a vulgar error. This being reported to Johnson, "Nay," said he,

"do not let him be thankful, for he was right, and I was wrong." Like his uncle Andrew, in the ring at Smithfield, Johnson, in a circle of disputants, was determined neither to be thrown nor conquered. Notwithstanding all his piety, self-government or the command of his passions in conversation, does not seem to have been among his attainments. Whenever he thought the contention was for superiority, he has been known to break out with violence, and even ferocity. When the fray was over, he generally softened into repentance, and, by conciliating measures, took care that no animosity should be left rankling in the breast of his antagonist. Of this defect he seems to have been conscious. In a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he says, "Poor Baretti! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank, and manly and independent, and, perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank, he thinks, is to be cynical; and to be independent, is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather, because of his misbehaviour, I am afraid, he learned part of me. I hope to set him, hereafter, a better example." For his own intolerant and over-bearing spirit he apologized, by observing, that it had done some good; obscenity and impiety were repressed in his company.

It was late in life, before he had the habit of mixing, otherwise than occasionally, with polite company. At Mr. Thrale's he saw a constant succession of well-accomplished visitors. In that society he began to wear off the rugged points of his own character. He saw the advantages of mutual civility, and endeavoured to profit by the models before him. He aimed at what has been called, by Swift, the "lesser morals," and by Cicero, "minores virtutes." His endeavour, though new and late, gave pleasure to all his acquaintance. Men were glad to see that he was willing to be communicative on equal terms and reciprocal complacence. The time was then expected, when he was to cease being what George Garrick, brother to the celebrated actor, called him, the first time he heard him converse, "a tremendous companion." He certainly wished to be polite, and even thought himself so; but his civility still retained something uncouth and harsh. His manners took a milder tone, but the endeavour was too palpably seen. He laboured even in trifles. He was a giant gaining a purchase to lift a feather.

It is observed, by the younger Pliny, that "in the confines of virtue and great qualities, there are, generally, vices of an opposite nature." In Dr. Johnson not one ingredient can take the name of vice. From his attainments in literature, grew the pride of knowledge; and from

his powers of reasoning, the love of disputation and the vain glory of superior vigour. His piety, in some instances, bordered on superstition. He was willing to believe in preternatural agency, and thought it not more strange, that there should be evil spirits than evil men. Even the question about second sight held him in suspense. "Second sight," Mr. Pennant tells us, "is a power of seeing images impressed on the organs of sight, by the power of fancy; or on the fancy, by the disordered spirits operating on the mind. It is the faculty of seeing spectres or visions, which represent an event actually passing at a distance, or likely to happen at a future day. In 1771, a gentleman, the last who was supposed to be possessed of this faculty, had a boat at sea, in a tempestuous night, and, being anxious for his freight, suddenly started up, and said his men would be drowned, for he had seen them pass before him with wet garments and dropping locks. The event corresponded with his disordered fancy. And thus," continues Mr. Pennant, "a distempered imagination, clouded with anxiety, may make an impression on the spirits; as persons, restless, and troubled with indignation, see various forms and figures, while they lie awake in bed." This is what Dr. Johnson was not willing to reject. He wished for some positive proof of communications with another world. His benevolence embraced the whole race of man, and yet was tinctured with particular prejudices. He was pleased with the minister in the isle of Skie, and loved him so much, that he began to wish him not a presbyterian. To that body of dissenters his zeal for the established church, made him, in some degree, an adversary; and his attachment to a mixed and limited monarchy, led him to declare open war against what he called a sullen republican. He would rather praise a man of Oxford than of Cambridge. He disliked a whig, and loved a tory. These were the shades of his character, which it has been the business of certain party-writers to represent in the darkest colours.

Since virtue, or moral goodness, consists in a just conformity of our actions to the relations, in which we stand to the supreme being and to our fellow-creatures, where shall we find a man who has been, or endeavoured to be, more diligent in the discharge of those essential duties? His first prayer was composed in 1738; he continued those fervent ejaculations of piety to the end of his life. In his Meditations we see him scrutinizing himself with severity, and aiming at perfection unattainable by man. His duty to his neighbour consisted in universal benevolence, and a constant aim at the production of happiness. Who was more sincere and steady in his

friendships? It has been said, that there was no real affection between him and Garrick. On the part of the latter, there might be some corrosions of jealousy. The character of Prospero, in the Rambler, No. 200, was, beyond all question, occasioned by Garrick's ostentatious display of furniture and Dresden china. It was surely fair to take, from this incident, a hint for a moral essay; and, though no more was intended, Garrick, we are told, remembered it with uneasiness. He was also hurt, that his Lichfield friend did not think so highly of his dramatic art, as the rest of the world. The fact was, Johnson could not see the passions, as they rose, and chased one another, in the varied features of that expressive face; and, by his own manner of reciting verses, which was wonderfully impressive, he plainly showed, that he thought, there was too much of artificial tone and measured cadence, in the declamation of the theatre. The present writer well remembers being in conversation with Dr. Johnson, near the side of the scenes, during the tragedy of King Lear: when Garrick came off the stage, he said, "You two talk so loud, you destroy all my feelings." "Prithee," replied Johnson, "do not talk of feelings, Punch has no feelings." This seems to have been his settled opinion; admirable as Garrick's imitation of nature always was, Johnson thought it no better than mere mimickry. Yet, it is certain, that he esteemed and loved Garrick; that he dwelt with pleasure on his praise; and used to declare, that he deserved his great success, because, on all applications for charity, he gave more than was asked. After Garrick's death, he never talked of him, without a tear in his eye. He offered, if Mrs. Garrick would desire it of him, to be the editor of his works, and the historian of his life. It has been mentioned, that, on his death-bed, he thought of writing a Latin inscription to the memory of his friend. Numbers are still living who know these facts, and still remember, with gratitude, the friendship which he showed to them, with unaltered affection, for a number of years. His humanity and generosity, in proportion to his slender income, were unbounded. It has been truly said, that the lame, the blind, and the sorrowful, found, in his house, a sure retreat. A strict adherence to truth he considered as a sacred obligation, insomuch that, in relating the most minute anecdote, he would not allow himself the smallest addition to embellish his story. The late Mr. Tyers, who knew Dr. Johnson intimately, observed, "that he always talked, as if he was talking upon oath." After a long acquaintance with this excellent man, and an attentive retrospect to his whole conduct, such is the light in which he appears to the

writer of this essay. The following lines of Horace, may be deemed his picture in miniature:

"Iracundior est paulo? minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum? rideri possit, eo quod
Rusticius tonso toga defluit, et male laxus
In pede calceus hæret? At est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam: at tibi amicus: at ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore."

"Your friend is passionate, perhaps unfit
For the brisk petulance of modern wit.
His hair ill-cut, his robe, that awkward flows,
Or his large shoes, to raillery expose
The man you love; yet is he not possess'd
Of virtues, with which very few are blest?
While underneath this rude, uncouth disguise,
A genius of extensive knowledge lies."

FRANCIS'S *Hor.*, book i., sat. 3.

It remains to give a review of Johnson's works; and this, it i imagined, will not be unwelcome to the reader.

Like Milton and Addison, he seems to have been fond of his Lati poetry. Those compositions show, that he was an early scholar; bu his verses have not the graceful ease, that gave so much suavity t the poems of Addison. The translation of the Messiah labour under two disadvantages: it is first to be compared with Pope's ini mitable performance, and afterwards with the Pollio of Virgil. I may appear trifling to remark, that he has made the letter *o*, in th word *virgo*, long and short in the same line: "Virgo, virgo parit. But the translation has great merit, and some admirable lines. I the odes there is a sweet flexibility, particularly—to his worth friend Dr. Lawrence; on himself at the theatre, March 8, 1771 the ode in the isle of Skie; and that to Mrs. Thrale from the sam place.

His English poetry is such as leaves room to think, if he had de voted himself to the muses, that he would have been the rival Pope. His first production, in this kind, was London, a poem i imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. The vices of the metropol are placed in the room of ancient manners. The author had heate his mind with the ardour of Juvenal, and, having the skill to polis his numbers, he became a sharp accuser of the times. The Vanity Human Wishes, is an imitation of the tenth satire of the sar author. Though it is translated by Dryden, Johnson's imitation proaches nearest to the spirit of the original. The subject is tak

from the Alcibiades of Plato, and has an intermixture of the sentiments of Socrates, concerning the object of prayers offered up to the deity. The general proposition is, that good and evil are so little understood by mankind, that their wishes, when granted, are always destructive. This is exemplified in a variety of instances, such as riches, state-preferment, eloquence, military glory, long life, and the advantages of form and beauty. Juvenal's conclusion is worthy of a christian poet, and such a pen as Johnson's. "Let us," he says, "leave it to the gods to judge what is fittest for us. Man is dearer to his creator than to himself. If we must pray for special favour, let it be for a sound mind in a sound body. Let us pray for fortitude, that we may think the labours of Hercules, and all his sufferings, preferable to a life of luxury, and the soft repose of Sardanapalus. This is a blessing within the reach of every man; this we can give ourselves. It is virtue, and virtue only, that can make us happy." In the translation, the zeal of the christian conspired with the warmth and energy of the poet; but Juvenal is not eclipsed. For the various characters in the original, the reader is pleased, in the English poem, to meet with cardinal Wolsey, Buckingham stabbed by Felton, lord Strafford, Clarendon, Charles the twelfth of Sweden; and for Tully and Demosthenes, Lydiat, Galileo, and archbishop Laud. It is owing to Johnson's delight in biography, that the name of Lydiat is called forth from obscurity. It may, therefore, not be useless to tell, that Lydiat was a learned divine and mathematician in the beginning of the last century. He attacked the doctrine of Aristotle and Scaliger, and wrote a number of sermons on the harmony of the evangelists. With all his merit, he lay in the prison of Bocardo, at Oxford, till bishop Usher, Laud, and others, paid his debts. He petitioned Charles the first to be sent to Ethiopia, to procure manuscripts. Having spoken in favour of monarchy and bishops, he was plundered by the puritans, and twice carried away, a prisoner, from his rectory. He died very poor, in 1646.

The tragedy of Irene is founded on a passage in Knolles's History of the Turks; an author highly commended in the Rambler, No. 122. An incident in the life of Mahomet the great, first emperor of the Turks, is the hinge on which the fable is made to move. The substance of the story is shortly this: In 1453, Mahomet laid siege to Constantinople, and having reduced the place, became enamoured of a fair Greek, whose name was Irene. The sultan invited her to embrace the law of the prophet, and to grace his throne. Enraged at this intended marriage, the janizaries formed

a conspiracy to dethrone the emperor. To avert the impending danger, Mahomet, in a full assembly of the grandees, "catching with one hand," as Knolles relates, "the fair Greek by the hair of her head, and drawing his falchion with the other, he, at one blow, struck off her head, to the great terror of them all; and, having so done, said unto them: 'Now by this, judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his affections or not.'" The story is simple, and it remained for the author to amplify it, with proper episodes, and give it complication and variety. The catastrophe is changed, and horror gives place to terror and pity. But, after all, the fable is cold and languid. There is not, throughout the piece, a single situation to excite curiosity, and raise a conflict of passions. The diction is nervous, rich, and elegant; but splendid language, and melodious numbers, will make a fine poem—not a tragedy. The sentiments are beautiful, always happily expressed, but seldom appropriated to the character, and generally too philosophic. What Johnson has said of the tragedy of Cato, may be applied to Irene: "It is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama; rather a succession of just sentiments, in elegant language, than a representation of natural affections. Nothing excites or assuages emotion. The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we consider not what they are doing, nor what they are suffering; we wish only to know, what they have to say. It is unaffecting elegance, and chill philosophy." The following speech, in the mouth of a Turk, who is supposed to have heard of the British constitution, has been often selected from the numberless beauties with which Irene abounds:

> "If there be any land, as fame reports,
> Where common laws restrain the prince and subject;
> A happy land, where circulating power
> Flows through each member of th' embodied state,
> Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,
> Her grateful sons shine bright with ev'ry virtue;
> Untainted with the LUST OF INNOVATION;
> Sure, all unite to hold her league of rule,
> Unbroken, as the sacred chain of nature,
> That links the jarring elements in peace."

These are British sentiments. Above forty years ago, they found an echo in the breast of applauding audiences; and to this hour they are the voice of the people, in defiance of the metaphysics, and the new lights of certain politicians, who would gladly find their private

advantage in the disasters of their country; a race of men, "quibus nulla ex honesto spes."

The prologue to Irene is written with elegance, and, in a peculiar style, shows the literary pride and lofty spirit of the author. The epilogue, we are told, in a late publication, was written by sir William Yonge. This is a new discovery, but by no means probable. When the appendages to a dramatic performance are not assigned to a friend, or an unknown hand, or a person of fashion, they are always supposed to be written by the author of the play. It is to be wished, however, that the epilogue, in question, could be transferred to any other writer. It is the worst jeu d'esprit that ever fell from Johnson's pen.[1]

An account of the various pieces contained in this edition, such as miscellaneous tracts, and philological dissertations, would lead beyond the intended limits of this essay. It will suffice to say, that they are the productions of a man, who never wanted decorations of language, and always taught his reader to think. The life of the late king of Prussia, as far as it extends, is a model of the biographical style. The review of the Origin of Evil was, perhaps, written with asperity; but the angry epitaph which it provoked from Soame Jenyns, was an ill-timed resentment, unworthy of the genius of that amiable author.

The Rambler may be considered, as Johnson's great work. It was the basis of that high reputation, which went on increasing to the end of his days. The circulation of those periodical essays was not, at first, equal to their merit. They had not, like the Spectators, the art of charming by variety; and, indeed, how could it be expected? The wits of queen Anne's reign sent their contributions to the Spectator; and Johnson stood alone. A stagecoach, says sir Richard Steele, must go forward on stated days, whether there are passengers or not. So it was with the Rambler, every Tuesday and Saturday, for two years. In this collection Johnson is the great moral teacher of his countrymen; his essays form a body of ethics; the observations on life and manners, are acute and instructive; and the papers, professedly critical, serve to promote the cause of literature. It must, however, be acknowledged, that a settled gloom hangs over the author's mind; and all the essays, except eight or ten, coming from the same fountain-head, no wonder that they have the raciness of the soil from which they sprang. Of this uniformity

[1] This epilogue was written by Sir William Yonge. See vol. i., pp. 151, 152.—*Editor.*

Johnson was sensible. He used to say, that if he had joined a friend or two, who would have been able to intermix papers of a sprightly turn, the collection would have been more miscellaneous, and, by consequence, more agreeable to the generality of readers. This he used to illustrate by repeating two beautiful stanzas from his own ode to Cave, or Sylvanus Urban:

"Non ulla musis pagina gratior,
Quam quæ severis ludicra jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.

"Texente nymphis serta Lycoride,
Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis."

It is remarkable, that the pomp of diction, which has been objected to Johnson, was first assumed in the Rambler. His Dictionary was going on at the same time, and, in the course of that work, as he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought that the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or, at least, would admire the splendour and dignity of the style. And yet it is well known, that he praised, in Cowley, the ease and unaffected structure of the sentences. Cowley may be placed at the head of those who cultivated a clear and natural style. Dryden, Tillotson, and sir William Temple followed. Addison, Swift, and Pope, with more correctness, carried our language well nigh to perfection. Of Addison, Johnson was used to say, "he is the Raphaël of essay writers." How he differed so widely from such elegant models, is a problem not to be solved, unless it be true, that he took an early tincture from the writers of the last century, particularly sir Thomas Browne. Hence the peculiarities of his style, new combinations, sentences of an unusual structure, and words derived from the learned languages. His own account of the matter is: "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas." But he forgot the observation of Dryden: "If too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks, as if they were designed, not to assist the natives, but to conquer them." There is, it must be admitted, a swell of language, often out of all proportion to the sentiment; but there is, in general, a fulness of mind, and the thought seems to expand with the sound of the words. Determined to discard colloquial barbarisms

and licentious idioms, he forgot the elegant simplicity that distinguishes the writings of Addison. He had, what Locke calls, a round about view of his subject; and, though he never was tainted, like many modern wits, with the ambition of shining in paradox, he may be fairly called an original thinker. His reading was extensive. He treasured in his mind whatever was worthy of notice, but he added to it from his own meditation. He collected, "quæ reconderet, auc taque promeret." Addison was not so profound a thinker. He was "born to write, converse, and live with ease;" and he found an early patron in lord Somers. He depended, however, more upon a fine taste than the vigour of his mind. His Latin poetry shows, that he relished, with a just selection, all the refined and delicate beauties o the Roman classics; and, when he cultivated his native language, no wonder that he formed that graceful style, which has been so justly admired; simple, yet elegant; adorned, yet never over-wrought; rich in allusion, yet pure and perspicuous; correct, without labour; and though, sometimes, deficient in strength, yet always musical. His essays, in general, are on the surface of life; if ever original, it was in pieces of humour. Sir Roger de Coverly, and the tory fox-hunter need not to be mentioned. Johnson had a fund of humour, but he did not know it; nor was he willing to descend to the familiar idiom and the variety of diction, which that mode of composition required The letter, in the Rambler, No. 12, from a young girl that wants a place, will illustrate this observation. Addison possessed an unclouded imagination, alive to the first objects of nature and of art He reaches the sublime without any apparent effort. When he tells us, "If we consider the fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets; if we still discover new firmaments, and new lights, that are sunk further in those unfathomable depths of ether; we are lost in a labyrinth o suns and worlds, and confounded with the magnificence and immensity of nature;" the ease, with which this passage rises to unaffected grandeur, is the secret charm that captivates the reader. Johnson is always lofty; he seems, to use Dryden's phrase, to be "o'er-inform'd with meaning," and his words do not appear to himself adequate to his conception. He moves in state, and his periods are always harmonious. His Oriental Tales are in the true style of eastern magnificence, and yet none of them are so much admired, as the Visions of Mirza. In matters of criticism, Johnson is never the echo of preceding writers. He thinks, and decides, for himself. If we except the essays on the Pleasures of Imagination, Addison cannot

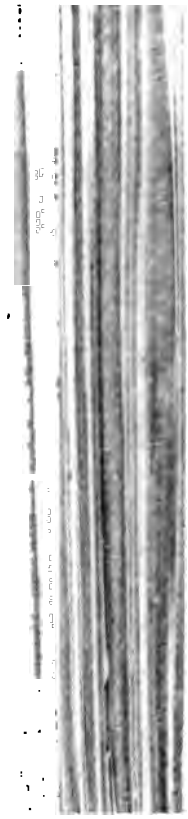
be called a philosophical critic. His moral essays are beautiful; but in that province nothing can exceed the Rambler, though Johnson used to say, that the essay on "the burthens of mankind," (in the Spectator, No. 558,) was the most exquisite he had ever read. Talking of himself, Johnson said, "Topham Beauclerk has wit, and every thing comes from him with ease; but when I say a good thing, I seem to labour." When we compare him with Addison, the contrast is still stronger: Addison lends grace and ornament to truth; Johnson gives it force and energy. Addison makes virtue amiable; Johnson represents it as an awful duty: Addison insinuates himself with an air of modesty; Johnson commands like a dictator; but a dictator in his splendid robes, not labouring at the plough: Addison is the Jupiter of Virgil, with placid serenity talking to Venus,

"Vultu, quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat."

Johnson is Jupiter Tonans: he darts his lightning and rolls his thunder, in the cause of virtue and piety. The language seems to fall short of his ideas; he pours along, familiarizing the terms of philosophy, with bold inversions, and sonorous periods; but we may apply to him, what Pope has said of Homer: "It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it: like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense."

It is not the design of this comparison to decide between these two eminent writers. In matters of taste every reader will choose for himself. Johnson is always profound, and, of course, gives the fatigue of thinking. Addison charms, while he instructs; and writing, as he always does, a pure, an elegant, and idiomatic style, he may be pronounced the safest model for imitation.

The essays written by Johnson in the Adventurer, may be called a continuation of the Rambler. The Idler, in order to be consistent with the assumed character, is written with abated vigour, in a style of ease and unlaboured elegance. It is the Odyssey, after the Iliad. Intense thinking would not become the Idler. The first number presents a well-drawn portrait of an Idler, and from that character no deviation could be made. Accordingly, Johnson forgets his austere manner, and plays us into sense. He still continues his lectures on human life, but he adverts to common occurrences, and is often content with the topic of the day. An advertise-



of any subsequent writer. This account of t
closed, after observing, that the author's mother b
23rd of January, 1759, there is an admirable pa
that event, on Saturday, the 27th of the same mo
reader, if he pleases, may compare it with another
Rambler, No. 54, on the conviction that rushes o
bed of a dying friend.

"Rasselas," says sir John Hawkins, "is a spe
guage scarcely to be paralleled; it is written in a
degree of immaculate purity, and displays the wh
eloquence." One cannot but smile at this enc
is, undoubtedly, both elegant and sublime. It is
life, displayed, it must be owned, in gloomy colo
natural melancholy, depressed, at the time, by th
solution of his mother, darkened the picture. A
keep curiosity awake by the artifice of unexpected
the design of a mind pregnant with better things
the heads of the chapters, will find, that it is not a co
that invites him forward, but a discussion of inte
reflections on human life; the history of Imlac, th
a dissertation upon poetry; the character of a wis
who discourses, with energy, on the government of
on a sudden, when death deprives him of his daug
maxims of wisdom, and the eloquence that adorn
to the stroke of affliction, with all the vehemenc
anguish. It is by pictures of life, and profound mo
expectation is engaged, and gratified throughout th

the cause of madness, and the dangerous prevalence of imagination, till, in time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, and the mind recurs constantly to the favourite conception, is carried on in a strain of acute observation; but it leaves us room to think, that the author was transcribing from his own apprehensions. The discourse on the nature of the soul, gives us all that philosophy knows, not without a tincture of superstition. It is remarkable, that the vanity of human pursuits was, about the same time, the subject that employed both Johnson and Voltaire; but Candide is the work of a lively imagination; and Rasselas, with all its splendour of eloquence, exhibits a gloomy picture. It should, however, be remembered, that the world has known the weeping, as well as the laughing philosopher.

The Dictionary does not properly fall within the province of this essay. The preface, however, will be found in this edition. He who reads the close of it, without acknowledging the force of the pathetic and sublime, must have more insensibility in his composition, than usually falls to the share of a man. The work itself, though, in some instances, abuse has been loud, and, in others, malice has endeavoured to undermine its fame, still remains the MOUNT ATLAS of English literature.

> "Though storms and tempests thunder on its brow,
> And oceans break their billows at its feet,
> It stands unmov'd, and glories in its height."

That Johnson was eminently qualified for the office of a commentator on Shakespeare, no man can doubt; but it was an office which he never cordially embraced. The public expected more than he had diligence to perform; and yet his edition has been the ground, on which every subsequent commentator has chosen to build. One note, for its singularity, may be thought worthy of notice in this place. Hamlet says, "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god-kissing carrion." In this Warburton discovered the origin of evil. Hamlet, he says, breaks off in the middle of the sentence; but the learned commentator knows what he was going to say, and, being unwilling to keep the secret, he goes on in a train of philosophical reasoning, that leaves the reader in astonishment. Johnson, with true piety, adopts the fanciful hypothesis, declaring it to be a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author. The general observations at the end of the several plays, and the preface, will be found in this edition. The former,

with great elegance and precision, give a summary view of each drama. The preface is a tract of great erudition and philosophical criticism.

Johnson's political pamphlets, whatever was his motive for writing them, whether gratitude for his pension, or the solicitation of men in power, did not support the cause for which they were undertaken. They are written in a style truly harmonious, and with his usual dignity of language. When it is said that he advanced positions repugnant to the "common rights of mankind," the virulence of party may be suspected. It is, perhaps, true, that in the clamour, raised throughout the kingdom, Johnson overheated his mind; but he was a friend to the rights of man, and he was greatly superior to the littleness of spirit, that might incline him to advance what he did not think and firmly believe. In the False Alarm, though many of the most eminent men in the kingdom concurred in petitions to the throne, yet Johnson, having well surveyed the mass of the people, has given, with great humour, and no less truth, what may be called, "the birth, parentage, and education of a remonstrance." On the subject of Falkland's islands, the fine dissuasive from too hastily involving the world in the calamities of war, must extort applause even from the party that wished, at that time, for scenes of tumult and commotion. It was in the same pamphlet, that Johnson offered battle to Junius, a writer, who, by the uncommon elegance of his style, charmed every reader, though his object was to inflame the nation in favour of a faction. Junius fought in the dark; he saw his enemy, and had his full blow; while he himself remained safe in obscurity. "But let us not," said Johnson, "mistake the venom of the shaft, for the vigour of the bow." The keen invective which he published, on that occasion, promised a paper war between two combatants, who knew the use of their weapons. A battle between them was as eagerly expected, as between Mendoza and Big Ben. But Junius, whatever was his reason, never returned to the field. He laid down his arms, and has, ever since, remained as secret as the man in the mask, in Voltaire's history.

The account of his journey to the Hebrides, or western isles of Scotland, is a model for such as shall, hereafter, relate their travels. The author did not visit that part of the world in the character of an antiquary, to amuse us with wonders taken from the dark and fabulous ages; nor, as a mathematician, to measure a degree, and settle the longitude and latitude of the several islands. Those, who expected such information, expected what was never intended. "In

every work regard the writer's end." Johnson went to see men and manners, modes of life, and the progress of civilization. His remarks are so artfully blended with the rapidity and elegance of his narrative, that the reader is inclined to wish, as Johnson did, with regard to Gray, that "to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment."

As to Johnson's Parliamentary Debates, nothing, with propriety, can be said in this place. They are collected, in two volumes, by Mr. Stockdale, and the flow of eloquence which runs through the several speeches, is sufficiently known.

It will not be useless to mention two more volumes, which may form a proper supplement to this edition.[1] They contain a set of sermons, left for publication by John Taylor, LL.D. The reverend Mr. Hayes, who ushered these discourses into the world, has not given them, as the composition of Dr. Taylor. All he could say for his departed friend was, that he left them, in silence, among his papers. Mr. Hayes knew them to be the production of a superior mind; and the writer of these memoirs owes it to the candour of that elegant scholar, that he is now warranted to give an additional proof of Johnson's ardour in the cause of piety, and every moral duty. The last discourse in the collection was intended to be delivered by Dr. Taylor, at the funeral of Johnson's wife; but that reverend gentleman declined the office, because, as he told Mr. Hayes, the praise of the deceased was too much amplified. He, who reads the piece, will find it a beautiful moral lesson, written with temper, and nowhere overcharged with ambitious ornaments. The rest of the discourses were the fund, which Dr. Taylor, from time to time, carried with him to his pulpit. He had the *largest bull* in England, and some of the best sermons.

We come now to the Lives of the Poets, a work undertaken at the age of seventy, yet, the most brilliant, and, certainly, the most popular, of all our author's writings. For this performance he needed little preparation. Attentive always to the history of letters, and, by his own natural bias, fond of biography, he was the more willing to embrace the proposition of the booksellers. He was versed in the whole body of English poetry, and his rules of criticism were settled with precision. The dissertation, in the life of Cowley, on the metaphysical poets of the last century, has the attraction of novelty, as well as sound observation. The writers, who followed Dr. Donne,

[1] This essay was prefixed by Murphy to his edition of Johnson's works, London, 1792.—*Editor.*

went in quest of something better than truth and nature. A
says, in Don Quixote, they wanted better bread than is
wheat. They took pains to bewilder themselves, and were
for no other purpose than to err. In Johnson's review of
works, false wit is detected in all its shapes, and the Gothi
glittering conceits, and far-fetched allusions, is exploded,
hoped, to revive again.

An author who has published his observations on the
Writings of Dr. Johnson, speaking of the Lives of the P
"These compositions, abounding in strong and acute re
with many fine, and even sublime, passages, have, unqu
great merit; but, if they be regarded, merely as contain
tions of the lives, delineations of the characters, and strict
several authors, they are far from being always to be dep
He adds: "The characters are sometimes partial, and ther
times, too much malignity of misrepresentation, to whicl
may be joined no inconsiderable portion of erroneous
The several clauses of this censure deserve to be answere
as the limits of this essay will permit.

In the first place, the facts are related upon the best in
and the best vouchers that could be gleaned, after a gre
time. Probability was to be inferred from such material
be procured, and no man better understood the nature of
evidence than Dr. Johnson; no man was more reli
observer of truth. If his history is any where defective,

be adopted by men of lively fancy. With regard to Gray, when he condemns the apostrophe, in which father Thames is desired to tell who drives the hoop, or tosses the ball, and then adds, that father Thames had no better means of knowing than himself; when he compares the abrupt beginning of the first stanza of the bard, to the ballad of Johnny Armstrong, "Is there ever a man in all Scotland;" there are, perhaps, few friends of Johnson, who would not wish to blot out both the passages.

It may be questioned, whether the remarks on Pope's Essay on Man can be received, without great caution. It has been already mentioned, that Crousaz, a professor in Switzerland, eminent for his Treatise of Logic, started up a professed enemy to that poem. Johnson says, "his mind was one of those, in which philosophy and piety are happily united. He looked, with distrust, upon all metaphysical systems of theology, and was persuaded, that the positions of Pope were intended to draw mankind away from revelation, and to represent the whole course of things, as a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality." This is not the place for a controversy about the Leibnitzian system. Warburton, with all the powers of his large and comprehensive mind, published a vindication of Pope; and yet Johnson says, that, "in many passages, a religious eye may easily discover expressions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty." This sentence is severe, and, perhaps, dogmatical. Crousaz wrote an Examen of the Essay on Man, and, afterwards, a commentary on every remarkable passage; and, though it now appears, that Mrs. Elizabeth Carter translated the foreign critic, yet it is certain, that Johnson encouraged the work, and, perhaps, imbibed those early prejudices, which adhered to him to the end of his life. He shuddered at the idea of irreligion. Hence, we are told, in the life of Pope, "Never were penury of knowledge, and vulgarity of sentiment, so happily disguised; Pope, in the chair of wisdom, tells much that every man knows, and much that he did not know himself; and gives us comfort in the position, that though man's a fool, yet God is wise; that human advantages are unstable; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own, and that happiness is always in our power." The reader, when he meets all this in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse. But, may it not be said, that every system of ethics must, or ought, to terminate, in plain and general maxims for the use of life? and, though in such axioms no discovery is made, does not the beauty of the moral theory consist in the premises, and the chain of

reasoning that leads to the conclusion? May not truth, as Johnson himself says, be conveyed to the mind by a new train of intermediate images? Pope's doctrine, about the ruling passion, does not seem to be refuted, though it is called, in harsh terms, pernicious, as well as false, tending to establish a kind of moral predestination, or overruling principle, which cannot be resisted. But Johnson was too easily alarmed in the cause of religion. Organized as the human race is, individuals have different inlets of perception, different powers of mind, and different sensations of pleasure and pain.

> "All spread their charms, but charm not all alike,
> On different senses different objects strike:
> Hence different passions more or less inflame,
> As strong or weak the organs of the frame.
> And hence one master-passion in the breast,
> Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest."

Brumoy says, Pascal, from his infancy, felt himself a geometrician; and Vandyke, in like manner, was a painter. Shakespeare, who, of all poets, had the deepest insight into human nature, was aware of a prevailing bias in the operations of every mind. By him we are told, "Masterless passion sways us to the mood of what it likes or loathes."

It remains to inquire, whether, in the lives before us, the characters are partial, and too often drawn with malignity of misrepresentation? To prove this, it is alleged, that Johnson has misrepresented the circumstances relative to the translation of the first Iliad, and maliciously ascribed that performance to Addison, instead of Tickell, with too much reliance on the testimony of Pope, taken from the account in the papers left by Mr. Spence. For the refutation of the fallacy imputed to Addison, we are referred to a note in the Biographia Britannica, written by the late judge Blackstone, who, it is said, examined the whole matter with accuracy, and found, that the first regular statement of the accusation against Addison, was published by Ruffhead, in his life of Pope, from the materials which he received from Dr. Warburton. But, with all due deference to the learned judge, whose talents deserve all praise, this account is by no means accurate.

Sir Richard Steele, in a dedication of the comedy of the Drummer, to Mr. Congreve, gave the first insight into that business. He says, in a style of anger and resentment: "If that gentleman (Mr. Tickell) thinks himself injured, I will allow I have wronged him upon this issue, that, if the reputed translator of the first book of Homer shall

please to give us another book, there shall appear another good judge in poetry, besides Mr. Alexander Pope, who shall like it." The authority of Steele outweighs all opinions, founded on vain conjecture, and, indeed, seems to be decisive, since we do not find that Tickell, though warmly pressed, thought proper to vindicate himself.

But the grand proof of Johnson's malignity, is the manner in which he has treated the character and conduct of Milton. To enforce this charge has wearied sophistry, and exhausted the invention of a party. What they cannot deny, they palliate; what they cannot prove, they say is probable. But why all this rage against Dr. Johnson? Addison, before him, had said of Milton:

> "Oh! had the poet ne'er profan'd his pen,
> To varnish o'er the guilt of faithless men!"

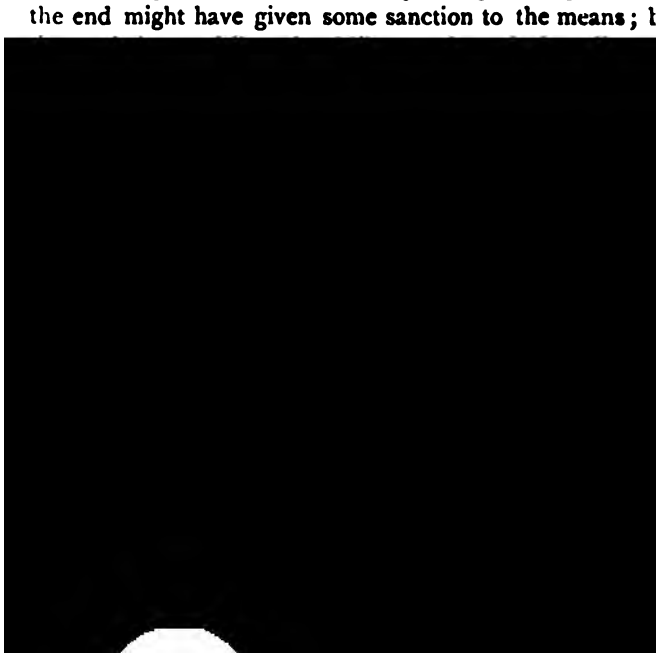
And had not Johnson an equal right to avow his sentiments? Do his enemies claim a privilege to abuse whatever is valuable to Englishmen, either in church or state? and must the liberty of unlicensed printing be denied to the friends of the British constitution?

It is unnecessary to pursue the argument through all its artifices, since, dismantled of ornament and seducing language, the plain truth may be stated in a narrow compass. Johnson knew that Milton was a republican: he says, "an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason, than that a popular government was the most frugal; for the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth." Johnson knew that Milton talked aloud "of the danger of re-admitting kingship in this nation;" and when Milton adds, "that a commonwealth was commended, or rather enjoined, by our Saviour himself, to all christians, not without a remarkable disallowance, and the brand of gentilism upon kingship," Johnson thought him no better than a wild enthusiast. He knew, as well as Milton, "that the happiness of a nation must needs be firmest and certainest in a full and free council of their own electing, where no single person, but reason only, sways;" but the example of all the republicks, recorded in the annals of mankind, gave him no room to hope, that reason only would be heard. He knew, that the republican form of government, having little or no complication, and no consonance of parts, by a nice mechanism forming a regular whole, was too simple to be beautiful, even in theory. In practice it, perhaps, never existed. In its most flourishing state, at Athens, Rome, and Carthage, it was a constant scene of



tumult and commotion. From the mischiefs of a wild
the progress has ever been to the dominion of an aristo
the word aristocracy, fatally includes the boldest and mo
citizens, who rise by their crimes and call themselves the
the state. By intrigue, by cabal, and faction, a perniciou
is sure to succeed, and end, at last, in the tyranny of a s
Tacitus, the great master of political wisdom, saw, under
authority of king, nobles, and people, a better form of g
than Milton's boasted republick; and what Tacitus admire
but despaired of enjoying, Johnson saw established in th
He knew that it had been overturned by the rage of fr
but he knew that, after the iron rod of Cromwell's usur
constitution was once more restored to its first principles.
was established, and this country was regenerated. It
nerated a second time, at the revolution: the rights of
then defined, and the blessings of good order, and civil li
been ever since diffused through the whole community.

The peace and happiness of society were what Dr. John
heart. He knew that Milton called his defence of the
defence of the people of England; but, however glosse
nished, he thought it an apology for murder. Had the
under a show of liberty, brought their king to the scaffold,
their subsequent conduct, that the public good inspired th
the end might have given some sanction to the means; b



country enslaved; he struck the blow for freedom, and he died with honour in the cause. Had he lived to be a secretary under Tiberius, what would now be said of his memory?

But still, it seems, the prostitution with which Milton is charged, since it cannot be defended, is to be retorted on the character of Johnson. For this purpose, a book has been published, called Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton; to which are added, Milton's Tractate of Education, and Areopagitica. In this laboured tract we are told, "There is one performance, ascribed to the pen of the Doctor, where the prostitution is of so singular a nature, that it would be difficult to select an adequate motive for it, out of the mountainous heap of conjectural causes of human passions, or human caprice. It is the speech of the late unhappy Dr. William Dodd, when he was about to hear the sentence of the law pronounced upon him, in consequence of an indictment for forgery. The voice of the public has given the honour of manufacturing this speech to Dr. Johnson; and the style, and configuration of the speech itself, confirm the imputation. But it is hardly possible to divine what could be his motive for accepting the office. A man, to express the precise state of mind of another, about to be destined to an ignominious death, for a capital crime, should, one would imagine, have some consciousness, that he himself had incurred some guilt of the same kind." In all the schools of sophistry, is there to be found so vile an argument? In the purlieus of Grub street, is there such another mouthful of dirt? In the whole quiver of malice, is there so envenomed a shaft?

After this, it is to be hoped, that a certain class of men will talk no more of Johnson's malignity. The last apology for Milton is, that he acted according to his principles. But Johnson thought those principles detestable; pernicious to the constitution, in church and state, destructive of the peace of society, and hostile to the great fabric of civil policy, which the wisdom of ages has taught every Briton to revere, to love, and cherish. He reckoned Milton in that class of men, of whom the Roman historian says, when they want, by a sudden convulsion, to overturn the government, they roar and clamour for liberty; if they succeed, they destroy liberty itself: "Ut imperium evertant, libertatem præferunt; si perverterint, libertatem ipsam aggredientur." Such were the sentiments of Dr. Johnson; and it may be asked, in the language of Bolingbroke, "Are these sentiments, which any man, who is born a Briton, in any circumstances, in any situation, ought to be ashamed, or afraid to avow?" Johnson has done

ample justice to Milton's poetry: the criticism on Paradise Lost is a sublime composition. Had he thought the author as good and pious a citizen as Dr. Watts, he would have been ready, notwithstanding his nonconformity, to do equal honour to the memory of the man.

It is now time to close this essay, which the author fears has been drawn too much into length. In the progress of the work, feeble as it may be, he thought himself performing the last human office to the memory of a friend, whom he loved, esteemed, and honoured:

> "His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
> Munere." ——

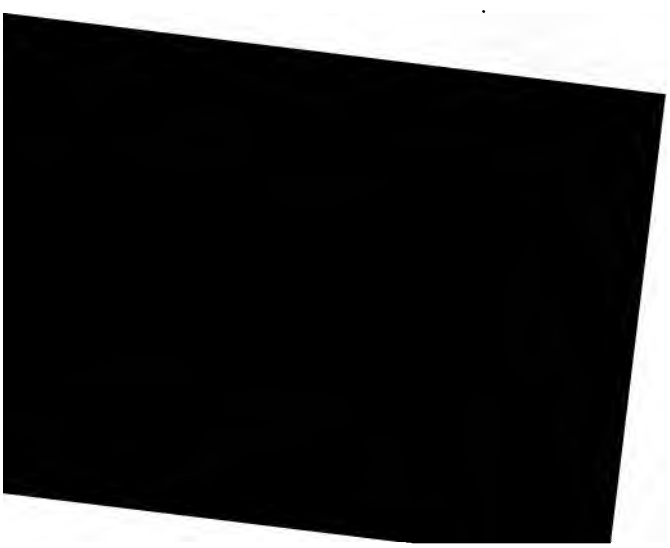
The author of these memoirs has been anxious to give the features of the man, and the true character of the author. He has not suffered the hand of partiality to colour his excellencies with too much warmth; nor has he endeavoured to throw his singularities too much into the shade. Dr. Johnson's failings may well be forgiven, for the sake of his virtues. His defects were spots in the sun. His piety, his kind affections, and the goodness of his heart, present an example worthy of imitation. His works still remain a monument of genius and of learning. Had he written nothing but what is contained in this edition of his works (Lond. 1792), the quantity shows a life spent in study and meditation. If to this be added, the labour of his Dictionary, and other various productions, it may be fairly allowed, as he used to say of himself, that he has written his share. In the volumes here presented to the public (Murphy's edition of Johnson's works) the reader will find a perpetual source of pleasure and instruction. With due precautions, authors may learn to grace their style with elegance, harmony, and precision; they may be taught to think with vigour and perspicuity; and, to crown the whole, by a diligent attention to these books, all may advance in virtue.







INDEX TO JOHNSONIANA.





INDEX TO JOHNSONIANA.

ACTION in the pulpit, 229, 232.
Addison, Johnson's commendation of, 76; shows fewer of Milton's excellencies than Johnson, but fewer defects, 190.
Adventurer, The, Johnson writes, 137.
Anacreon's Dove, translated, 20.
American politics, Dr. Thomas Campbell on, 238.
Anderson's Life of Johnson annotated by Bishop Percy, 211.
Anecdotes of Johnson by Mrs. Piozzi, 1-113.
Anne, Queen, touches Johnson, 8.
Apophthegms by Johnson, from Hawkins, 115-128.
Arithmetic resorted to by Johnson to steady his mind, 33.
Attorney. Johnson's sarcasm against one, 101.
Authors, Johnson's assistance to, 47, 48.
Ascham, Roger, quoted, 94.
Aston, Molly, 61, 63.

Bacon, Sir Francis, Burke and Johnson's opinion of, 335.
Ball, a, at Spring Gardens, the belles of the season described, 251.
Bangor. The beauty of its position, 219; Cathedral of, 220.
Barber, Francis, 80, 81; Johnson's care not to hurt his feelings, 96.
Barbauld, Mrs., 10.
Baretti, described by Campbell, 229; a "mortal foe" of Boswell's, 238.
Barnard, Dr., does justice to Johnson's good breeding, 17; Johnson's rudeness to, 318; and apology, *ibid.*; his verses on the occasion, 318-320.
Baskerville, the printer, 253.
Bath and its beauties, 251, 252.
Bathurst, "dear, dear," 11; a good hater, 35.
Beauclerc, Topham, agreeable without effort, 71; Johnson on, 408.
Belief and opinion not to be confounded, 73.
Belles of the season, in 1775, 251.
Benevolence, Johnson's, 35, 322.
Biographer, Who will be my? says Johnson, 15.
Biographical Sketch of Johnson, by T. Tyers, 171-193.
Birmingham, Dr. Campbell visits, 221.
Birthday party in honour of Johnson and Miss Thrale, 80.
Blenheim Park, 223.
Blinking Sam, Johnson protests against being handed down to posterity as, 93.
Bonduca, Garrick's unsuccessful epilogue to, 280.
Bolingbroke, "loaded a blunderbuss against religion and left a scoundrel to pull the trigger," 127.
Books, for children, 10; we should have them about us, 23; those we can carry to the fire are most useful, 117.
Boothby, Miss Hill, Johnson's admiration and regard for, 62, 63; her letters to Johnson, 131-167; her death, 166.
Boswell, mentioned by Dr. Campbell, 244; Johnson says he asks too many questions, 245; his Life of Johnson, 303.

Boulter, Bishop, lines in memory of, repeated by Johnson, 311.
Braganza, performance of, 224; a one-sided play, 239.
Brocklesby, Dr., his advice to Johnson, 188; his generous kindness to Johnson, 393.
Browne, Hawkins, the most delightful converser Johnson ever met, 67.
—— Sir William, his clever retort on Johnson, 18.
Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, 122, 348.
Burke, Edmund, his famous speech in Parliament, 19; Johnson's favourite saying about him, 80; "Burke in a bag," 91.
Burney, Fanny, Extracts from her Diary concerning Johnson, 279-302; meets Johnson, 279; her dress admired by Johnson, 282; her Evelina discussed, 289; encouraged by Johnson to "down" Mrs. Montagu, 290; goes to see Johnson when ill, 296, 299; entreated to pray for him, 297.
Burney, Mrs., Johnson obliges her to change her dress, 283.
Butler, Johnson's lament that so little had been said about, 5.

Cambridge "downed" by Johnson in comparison with Oxford, 17.
Campbell, Dr. Thomas, his Diary, 219-261; his first visit to England, 219-254; his second visit to London, 254; his third visit, 254; his fourth visit, 255; his fifth visit, 256; his sixth visit, 260; his seventh visit, 261; visits Birmingham, 221; meets Johnson at the Thrales, 229; meets Boswell, 238; on American politics, *ibid.*; dines with Mr. Dilly as Boswell's guest to meet Johnson, 241; Ireland and Irish affairs discussed by Johnson and Dr. Campbell, 242; dines with the Thrales with Johnson, Boswell, and Baretti, 243; dines with General Oglethorpe and meets Johnson, 245; dines at the Thrales with Johnson, 248; calls on Johnson at home, 249; his visit to Johnson in 1781, 254; visits Paris, 256; visits Brighton, 258, 259; compiles the Life of Goldsmith from materials furnished by the Bishop of Dromore, 260.
Canters, to be scorned, 94.
Canting. Prithee, my dear, have done with canting, 26.
Cards, dress, and dancing advocated by Johnson, 43, 44.
Caricature of contemporary poets by Johnson, 28, 29.
Carter, Mrs., could make a pudding as well as read Greek, 122.
Cat, Johnson's, 96.
Catalogue, Johnson employed to make one of the Harleian Library, 177.
Catharine (Chambers), the nurse who taught Johnson to read, 10.
Cave, Johnson's early patron, 174, 352 *et seq.*
Characters in the Ramblers, 22.
Charity, Johnson's, boundless, 42, 189, 192.
Charles XII., Life of, by Voltaire, praised by Johnson, 121.
Chelsea China, a dessert service of, presented to Johnson, preserved at Holland House, 207; Johnson's visits to the manufactory of, 207.
Chemistry, Johnson's dangerous experiments in, 89.
Chester, Dr. Campbell visits, 221.
Chesterfield, Lord, 178, 359-360, 370; Johnson's letter to, 371.
Childhood, Johnson speaks of his own, 11.
Children, Johnson's indulgence of, 12; to be guided by positive not general rules, 13; should be encouraged to remember and relate what strikes them, 14; the Langton's, troublesome, 282.
Cholmondeley, Mr., and Johnson's rudeness, 96.
Churchill, the satirist, 181.
Classes, the various, French and English compared, 259, 260.

Clerke, Sir P. J., 293.
Club, The, in Ivy Lane, 363; at the Turk's Head, 380.
Codfish, price of, in London in 1775, 228.
Collier, Dr., condemned for saying what is now applauded in Johnson, 69.
Colours, Johnson's love of bright, 104.
Combe, John, distich on, said to be by Shakespeare, 222.
Common things said by Johnson in the newest manner, 187.
Commonplace book, Mrs. Thrales's, remarked on by Johnson, 20.
Composition, night was Johnson's usual time for, 177; his manner of, 212, 383.
Congé d'elire, Johnson's definition of, 128.
Congreve, Archdeacon, Johnson's schoolfellow, 229, 231.
Contradicting, Johnson's habit of, 84, 85.
Conversation, Johnson's love of, 12, 79, 90; great power in, 187; historical and political not liked by Johnson, 34.
Convulsionary, Johnson a, 173.
College life, Johnson says details of his, to be learned from Adams and Taylor, 14.
Cooper, Johnson calls, a literary Punchinello, 178.
Corbet, Young, Johnson's companion at Oxford, 343.
Corke, Lord, presents the Dictionary to the Academia at Florence, 179.
Corneille to Shakespeare as a clipped hedge to a forest, 25.
Corpore vili and the rejoinder of a poor man, 118.
Cotterel, Miss, at her house Johnson and Reynolds first met, 309; *downed* by Johnson in one of his early visits, 317.
Courtesy, Johnson's ceremonious, to poor dependants, 25.
Critic, Johnson as a, 189, 190, 201.
Cumberland, Richard, his recollections of Johnson, 197-206; his verses on Johnson, 201.
—— Mrs., her genial tea-table, 199.
Cummings, the Quaker, and the anonymous letter, 72.

Dancing, cards, and dress advocated by Johnson, 43, 44.
Davies, Tom, publishes Johnson's verse without his consent, 24.
Death, Johnson's, 193.
Debates, Johnson's Parliamentary, 174, 175; Murphy's account of Johnson's acknowledgment of, 357, 358.
Decline, a gradual, gentle, impossible to arrest, 73.
Declamation, Johnson's power of, 111, 119.
Diary by Dr. Thomas Campbell, 219, 261.
Dictionary, The, Johnson thought he could have done it easily in two years, 23; new edition of, 23; Dedication to, 143; "composed amid inconvenience and distraction in sickness and sorrow," 173-178; remuneration for, 178; Bishop Percy on the manner of its compilation, 213; Murphy's account of the undertaking of, 359; Johnson's poem after revising, 374-376; completed, 369, 410.
Dies iræ, Dies illa, Johnson's emotion in reading, 77.
Dilly, Mr., dinner at his house with Johnson, Boswell, and Dr. Campbell, 241-243.
Dinners, Dr. Campbell complains of the great sameness in, 237.
Discourses, Reynolds's, owe much to Johnson's influence, 335.
Disgrace. "If you do not see the honour, Sir, I feel the disgrace," 78.
Diversion, so called, 99.
Dodd, Dr., Dr. Campbell hears him preach, 246.
Dodsley, Mr., Johnson calls him his patron, 174.

Dogs, fighting, Johnson throws them out of the window, 45.
Dove, Anacreon's, 20.
Downs, the Brighton, hated by Johnson, 99.
Dreams, Johnson's feeling about, 11.
Dress, Johnson's particularity about, 106; he makes one lady change hers, 107; his own costume, 198.
Dryden, Johnson's great reverence for, 24; his epigram on Milton translated by Johnson, 30.
Duck, Johnson's childish epitaph on, 8.

Education, Johnson's views on, 82, 83; Hill Boothby on, 138.
Election, Johnson joins in the fun at an, 82.
Elocution, Sheridan's writings on, 117.
Elphinston, Mr. James, 141.
Emotion, Johnson's, in attempting to read *Dies iræ*, *Dies illa*, 77.
Expiration, Johnson's death a quiet and silent, 193.
Essayist, Johnson as an, 200.
Epigrams by Johnson, 30, 31; Dryden's, 31.
Epitaph to Mrs. Salusbury, 51, 52; to Mr. Thrale, 52, 53; on Hogarth, 54; on Miss Hill Boothby, 167; on Levett, 190; Johnson's, both in Latin and English, much admired, 192; extempore, written on each other by a merry party after dinner, including Johnson, Burke, and Goldsmith, 204.
Evelina, discussed at Streatham, 287.
Eyesight, Johnson's defective, 40.

False Alarm, The, Johnson's favourite pamphlet, 19.
Faulkener's Chelsea quoted, 207.
Fawkes, Frank, his translation of Anacreon's Dove, 20.
Foote, Johnson's tribute to his happy manner, 67, 118; his wit and readiness, 119, 382.
Ford, Cornelius, Johnson's uncle, 6, 9, 341-343.
—— Sarah, Johnson's mother, 7-13.
Fitzherbert, Mrs., Johnson's regard and esteem for, 62; Mr., 137, 157.
Flattery, Johnson's rough speech to Hannah More on her, 71.
Flint, Bet, and her verses, 284.
French, the, have "few sentiments, but express them neatly, little meat, but dress it well," 41.
Friends, something pleasing in the misfortunes of, 36.
Fruit, Johnson's love of, 41.
Fugitive pieces, published without Johnson's consent, 24.
Fuller, Rose, 282.

Garrick, Johnson teases, 25; his story of Johnson throwing a man and his chair into the pit, 45; Johnson refuses to believe in his illness, 73; Johnson at his funeral, 206; described by Dr. Campbell, 229; his epilogue to Bonduca, 280; Johnson will not allow anyone else to abuse him, 281; Murphy's account of, 350, 351; Johnson's real regard for, 401.
General scholarship and general knowledge possessed by Johnson, 200.
Genius, Johnson on, 298.
Gesticulations, Johnson's, 322.
Gibraltar, Elliot's defence of, 55.
Ghost, Johnson said to be like a, 79.
Goldsmith, Oliver, 15; the story of Dr. Minor and Goodman Dull, 70; tells what he felt when his play was hissed, 92; Johnson sells the Vicar of Wakefield for him, 47, 205; his first comedy, 202; She Stoops to Conquer carried through its first night by the efforts of Johnson and his friends, 202, 203; his epitaph on Cumberland in Retaliation, 204; his death, 205; his appearance described by Miss Reynolds, 312.
Gower, Lord, 184, 354.
Grainger, his Ode on Solitude admirably repeated by Johnson, 322.
Gray, the Torré of poetry, 127; Johnson's opinion of his poetry, 190.

Grandison, Sir Charles, Miss Boothby on, 138.
Greek, Johnson professes that he knows none, but discomfits strangers who take him at his word, 24, 185.
Grierson, Mr., Johnson's good stories of him, 46.
Grotto, Johnson's sharp speech to a lady showing one off, 78.
Gwatkin, Miss, Reynolds' grandniece, communicates a paper by him on Johnson's character, 330.

Hamlet, Johnson reads, when nine years old, 11.
Hampton Court, Dr. Campbell visits, 249.
Harris, James, his dedication full of faults, 26.
Hawkins, Sir John, his Apophthegms, 117-128; a remark of, corrected by Bishop Percy, 212; responsible for the arrangements at Johnson's funeral, 304; injustice and misrepresentation of his Life of Johnson, 391.
Hawkesworth, Jack, Johnson's friend, 15; a victim to newspaper abuse, 72, 183.
Health, Johnson's, always bad, 33; becomes worse, 50; of the hundred sublunary things given to man, health is ninety-nine, 172.
Hermit of Teneriffe, composed in one night, 175.
Hervey, Johnson's love for every one of that name, 61.
Historical conversation not liked by Johnson, 34.
Hodge, Johnson's cat, 96.
Hogarth, the painter, his anxiety for Mr. Thrale to become acquainted with Johnson, 54.
Holland House, Princess Liechtenstein's quoted, 207.
Holyhead, Dr. Campbell visits, 219.
Honour. "If you do not see the honour, I feel the disgrace," 78.
Hoole, Mr., accompanies Fanny Burney to Johnson's sick-room, 290, 299.
Hume, David, Johnson's prejudice against, 122.
Humour, Johnson's, 69.
Hunter, Mr., the schoolmaster, hated by Johnson, 11.
Hunting. Johnson hunts, but finds no pleasure in it, 79.

Improvisatore, the Italian, Johnson's surprise at, 121, 122.
Improvisation, Johnson's power of, 64.
Incredulity, Johnson's, 55.
Infidels, Johnson's horror of, 38, 39.
Inn, The, Shenstone's poem, repeated by Johnson, 310.
Instruction, Johnson's story of the young man who desired, 87.
Inscription, Latin, written by Mr. Beauclerk under Johnson's portrait, 121.
Interest, Johnson's, in everything of every kind, 192.
In vino veritas answered, 97, 98.
Ireland and Irish affairs discussed by Johnson and Dr. Campbell, 242, 254.
Irene, presented by Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, 148; account of, 174, 403.
Irreparable or irrepairable? 86.

James, Dr., acquainted with Johnson's early life, 15.
Jesuits. Boileau says they lengthen the Creed and shorten the Decalogue, 272.
Johnson. Dr. Campbell's description of his awkwardness, 230; his illness, 273; his death, 275; Murphy's description of, 397, 398, *et seq.*
Johnson, Michael, Johnson's father, 6, 7, 341, 342.
—— Mrs., Johnson's account of her to Mrs. Thrale, 57, 58; her death, 367, 368.
—— Samuel, Rev., of the Bowling Green Club, Rumford, 88.
Joke. Nothing produces so much enmity as the attempt to turn things off with a joke, 46.
Jones, the Orientalist, Johnson's panegyric on, 78.

Jordan, Mr., Johnson's tutor at Pembroke, 15, 17, 18.
Jortin, Dr., his sermons, 122.
Journey to the Western Islands, Johnson's satisfaction at the commendation it received, 119; written without the assistance of books, 188.
Junius, his letters mentioned, 18, 19; not all by one hand, 230.

Kames, Lord, his Elements of Criticism, 124.
Kelly, Hugh, 119.
Kindness, Johnson's great, to the poor, 35.
"Know thyself," Johnson's poem entitled, 374-376.
Knowledge, useful every day, 75, 98, 119.

Langton, Bennet, Johnson's regard for, 32; obtains Topham Beauclerk's portrait of Johnson, 121; his children, 282; Johnson's character of, 321.
Late hours, Johnson's love of, 48.
Latin, Johnson's fluent conversation in, 41, 118.
Lauder, his imposition concerning Milton, 364, 366.
Lawrence, Dr., his sad interview with Johnson, 32; Hill Boothby mentions, 132.
Leap, Cornelius Ford's famous, 6.
Learning. Johnson's saying on the general learning of the Scotch nation, 191.
Lennox, Charlotte, 286.
Letters, Johnson's, to Mrs. Thrale during the Scotch tour, 63; Johnson's interest in Lady Mary Wortley's, 97; from Miss Hill Boothby, 131-167; from Johnson to Hill Boothby, 163-166; Lord Chesterfield's to his son, described by Johnson, 178; Johnson's letters in general, Tyers' remarks on, 185.
Levett, Johnson's beautiful verses on, 190; Bishop Percy's opinion of, 215.
Lexiphanes, 372.
"Life is a pill none can swallow without gilding," said Johnson to excuse the indulgences he granted to the poor, 35.
Life and death, 172.
Library, the, at Streatham, 109.
Literary history, Johnson's great knowledge of, 84.
Literary assistance, Johnson's liberality in giving, 22.
Living, Johnson offered a good, 184.
Lobo, his voyage to Abyssinia, Murphy's account of Johnson's translation of, 345-349.
London, Johnson's, praised by Pope, 174.
Lydiat, account of, 403.
Lyttelton, Lord, Johnson's treatment of, 117; his envy of Shenstone, 118.

Madden, Dr., his liberality to Johnson, 213.
Madness of Johnson's father, 6.
Markland, Jeremiah, 94.
Marriage. "I advise no one to marry who is not likely to propagate understanding," 39; a mercenary, described, 95; second, 117; objects for, 120.
Maxim, Rochefoucault's, on malicious pleasure, 36.
Memory, Johnson's, 8; accuracy of, 46.
Millar, Andrew, the Mecænas of the age, 119.
Miller, Mr., the "dilettanti man," 241.
Milton. Johnson shows more of his excellencies, but also more of his defects than Addison, 190, 416, 417; his granddaughter's benefit, 365.
Minor, Dr., a story of Goldsmith, 70.
Montagu, Mrs., Johnson's compliments to, 78; his fun about, 290.
Money, the value of, should be taught, 75.
More, Mrs. Hannah, her introduction to Johnson, 265; meets Johnson at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, 266; entertains Johnson, Garrick, &c., 268; excites Johnson's anger by quoting Tom

Jones, 269; accompanies Johnson in Oxford, 272; sits for her portrait to Miss Reynolds, while Johnson talks to her, 270; her poem of the Bas Bleu, 273.
Mother, Johnson's, 7, 10, 12, 13.
Mulso, Miss, lines by, repeated by Johnson, 310.
Murphy, Arthur, persuades Mr. Thrale to invite Johnson to his house, 49; introduces himself to Johnson to excuse an accidental translation from a French translation of a paper in the Rambler, 89; his Essay on the Life and Genius of Johnson, 339-418; his introduction to Johnson, 373.
Music, the only sensual pleasure without vice, 117.
Myrtle, lines on receiving a sprig of, 16.
Mystery, Johnson's hatred of, 100, 117.

Needlework, much approved of by Johnson, 102.
Negroes, Johnson thinks them an inferior race, 81.
Newton, Sir Isaac, 184.
New Year, congratulations on the, 149.
Night, Johnson's time for composition, 177.
Nile, discovery of the head of, by Lobo, 345, 349.
Nugarum contemptor, an expression commonly used by Johnson in reverie, 191.
Number and numeration defined, 33.
Numbers, round, always false, 117.

Ode, Latin, to Mrs. Thrale, 63.
"Oft in danger yet alive," verses to to Mrs. Thrale, 64.
Old age, 95; "Belle grows old," 96.
Ombersley, the seat of Lord Sandys, where Johnson had for once in his life enough fruit, 41.
Ordinary. Dr. Campbell dines at one in the Strand, and describes the guests, 214.

Osborne, down
Oxford, give a love fo compa

Packthre scruple
Pamphle
Panic, Johnso
Paoli, G
Parodies 27, 28.
Patience,
Pinkethn her m 285.
Pennies of slee
Pension,
Pepys, 56.
Percy, marks, Life of
Person, 211.
Philosop bell go
Poets, L Murph
Poetry, d 77.
Politian, transla
Political Johnso
—— prin 177.
Politics, 238.
Poor, the 35.
Pope, Jo 311; L 119; h 174.

Porridge Island, 42.
Portrait of Johnson, looking at his pen held close to the eye, 93; one at Streatham, 109; one painted by Reynolds for Beauclerk, 121; Mrs. Thrale thinks very like, 121; one painted for Mrs. Thrale but left unfinished, 315.
Postscript, Mrs. Piozzi's, on a remark of Boswell's, 114.
Poverty, to be avoided by all honest means, 95.
Pride, Johnson's, 113.
Prior, quoted on suffering, 184.
Prosperity. Even prosperity could not spoil Reynolds, 78.
Psalmanazar, 122, 123; the *best* man Johnson knows, 68.
Punchinello, a literary, Johnson's name for Cooper, 178.
Purgatory, Johnson on the doctrine of, 368.
Pyramid, Boswell's name for his Life of Johnson, 275.

Quarrels to be studiously avoided, 57.
Quixote, Don, Mrs. Piozzi's digression about, 104, 105.

Race, Johnson runs a, with a young lady, 325.
Rambler, The, characters in the, 22; written as a relief while carrying on the Dictionary, 179; Johnson's choice of this title, 215; a paper so called appeared in 1712, 216; Murphy's account of, 363, 405.
Rasselas, a lamp of wisdom, 188, 378; described by Murphy, 409.
Raynal, Abbé, Johnson will not be introduced to, 275.
Reading, Johnson learns, from his mother and maid Catharine, 10; Johnson has violent fits of, 97.
Retaliation, Goldsmith's poem, written in revenge for some satirical epitaphs, 204, 205.
Retirement, religious, Johnson's veneration for, 38.
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, "a man not to be spoiled by prosperity," 78; Johnson's three requests to when dying, 119; on Johnson's character, 329-336.
—— Miss, her purity of character, 37; her Recollections of Johnson, 309-326.
Richardson, his love of flattery, 71; Johnson said that he had "picked the kernel of life while Fielding was content with the husk," 76.
Rochefoucault's maxim on malicious pleasure, 36.
Roman Catholics, Johnson beloved by, 38.
Romantic virtue distrusted, 117.
Round numbers, always false, 117.

Salt, price of, in 1775, 253.
Salusbury, Mrs., and Johnson disagree, 50; till her illness reconciles them, 51; her epitaph by Johnson in Latin, 51; translated by Murphy, 52.
Sandys, Lord, and his garden, 41.
Savage, Johnson's Life of, said to have been written in thirty-six hours, 175; Murphy's account of, 352, 353.
Saving, the habit to be encouraged, 60.
Scotch nation, the general learning of, 191.
Scruples make men miserable, but seldom good, 44; Johnson consulted on, 85.
Scoundrel. Johnson fears Mrs. Thrale will spoil him into one, 68; is one who is afraid of anything, 118.
Sentimental distress, Johnson had no sympathy for, 36.
Sermons, two volumes of, by Johnson, 412.
Shakespeare and Corneille compared, 25.
Shakespeare, his tomb, 222; Johnson's edition of, 377.
Sharp sayings are no more a true sample of the character of a man than a pitcher of water of the contents of the river Nile, 200.

Shenstone, 118, 119.
Sherlock, his French and English letters criticised, 185.
Shoes. Johnson says there are more gentlemen than shoes in Scotland, 200.
Skating, French verses on people, and translations, 56, 57.
Sketch, biographical, by T. Tyers, 171-193.
Sliding, Johnson's story of his, 15.
Smart, Christopher, introduces Tyers to Johnson, 185.
Society, recommended for young people, 43.
Solomon, Prior's description of King, 191.
Sorrow, Johnson's excessive, on the loss of his wife, 63.
Stanley, the blind leader of the band in Drury Lane, 226.
Steele's Essays, "too thin," 25.
Story, a, is only valuable as it is true, 46.
Stories, Johnson's admirable power of telling, 46, 47.
Style, Johnson's, 179, 180; Cumberland on, 198; Twining on, 303.
Sumner, Dr., his story of Johnson and Mrs. Macaulay, 118.
Swift, censured by Johnson, 44; Johnson's dislike of, 213.
Swimming, Johnson's, 118.

T, Johnson's papers in the Adventurer signed with a, 136.
Taylor, Dr., knows Johnson's "heart better than anyone," 15.
Tasks, holiday, Johnson's dislike of, 12, 13.
Taxation not Tyranny, appearance of this pamphlet, 230.
Talk. Johnson's power of leading people to talk on what they knew best, 186.
Te veniente die, Te decedente, 186.
Tea-table, Mrs. Cumberland's genial, 199; Mrs. Thrale kept by Johnson at, till four in the morning, 49; Johnson's always spread, 186; Hannah More's, 268.

Teneriff
night,
Temple
Theatre
31 ;
31, 3
Thrale,
Johns
satior
—— M
Camp
234,
by, 2
——
Johns
Tissingt
157.
Tories
Tory pr
Tour, J
Murp
Towers,
quote
Tragedy
son's,
Transla
at col
Travelli
from
40.
Trent,
son's
a box
Truth,
46 ;
84.
Twining
his le
Tyers,
171-1

Uncles,
perso
Univers
take
randu
395.
Univers
192,

Vanity of Human Wishes, the writing of, 126.
Verses on Johnson by Cumberland, 201.
Visiter, The, a periodical to which Johnson was a contributor, 377.
Visitors always welcome to Johnson, 186.
Vows, Johnson's horror of, 85.

Wakefield, Vicar of, Johnson sells for Goldsmith, 47.
Walmsley, Mr., gives Johnson recommendations, 174, 350, 351.
Warburton, Johnson's gratitude to, 120, 127.
Whigs and Tories, 18.
Wilkes, John, the meeting with Johnson at dinner, 190; Johnson's dislike of, 315.
—— Israel, Johnson's rudeness to, 316.
Williams, Miss, at Johnson's tea-table, 215.
—— Dr. Zachary, 369.
Wine, Johnson's use of, 128.
Woodhouse, the poet, 49.
Writing, Johnson's facility at, and dilatoriness in, 21; Johnson driven to write by necessity alone, 197.

Young, his description of night, 25.

CHISWICK PRESS: C. WHITTINGHAM AND CO., TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

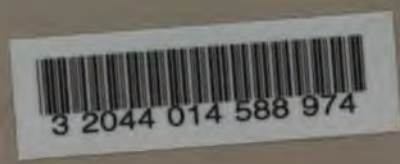












THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

Harvard College Widener Library
Cambridge, MA 02138 (617) 495-2413

